The Education Digest

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CONTENTS

Government in Business	*Journal of the N.E.A.*	1
The Social Significance of Academic Freedom	*Social Frontier*	5
The Scholar in an Age of Conflicts	*By Charles A. Beard*	8
War and Peace	*Living Age*	11
Variables and Constants	*English Journal*	12
Failure Is Too Costly for the School Child	*Parents' Magazine*	15
The Besetting Sin of Pedagogy	*Social Studies*	18
The School as the Center of the Community	*Journal of Educational Sociology*	20
Educational Implications of Recent Changes in Farm Population	*Elementary School Journal*	23
Education for Culture in an Age of Science and Machinery	*School Review*	26
Stranded Children	*National Parent-Teacher Magazine*	28
The American Film Institute	*Educational Screen*	30
Education for Safety in America's Secondary Schools	*Bulletin of the Department of Secondary-School Principals*	32
Vocational Guidance in the Elementary School	*National Elementary Principal*	34
The Relation of the Federal Government to Education	*School and Society*	36
Death Rate for Children Decreases	*School Life*	39
State Requirements that Discourage Educated Persons from Teaching	*Educational Record*	40
The Integration of Vocational Education and the Community	*California Journal of Secondary Education*	42
Significance of High School Marks	*Journal of Higher Education*	44
What Eidetic Imagery Means to Children	*Childhood Education*	46
How to Increase the Laboratory Equipment	*School Science and Mathematics*	48
The Listening Habits of Pupils	*English Journal*	50
America Must Choose	*By Arthur G. Crane*	53
Should the Teacher Play Politics?	*Classroom Interests*	56
Who Is the Exceptional Child?	*Educational Administration and Supervision*	58
Education for Democracy	*By John W. Studebaker*	62

APRIL, 1936

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THE EDUCATION DIGEST

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GOVERNMENT IN BUSINESS

STUART CHASE

In the Journal of the National Education Association

NEARLY three centuries ago, a citizen of Massachusetts in the little town of Newbury was arrested with his wife Sarah, and fined five shillings for "picking peas on the Sabbath Day." He was Aquila Chase, and I am his great great grandson to the ninth generation. Perhaps I come by my unorthodox views naturally!

Government was in business then, as it has always been wherever human communities are found. The word socialism had not been coined. Certain activities were carried on by individuals on their own account; other activities were carried on by individuals on the community's account. In early New England, the latter had to do with the administration of justice, common defense, roads, schools, and the church. Church and state were closely allied.

Government business was present; it was essential; but its activities were limited by the community pattern of self-sufficiency. Unemployment, of course, was a word as unknown as socialism. This pattern had not greatly changed, over most of the area of the Thirteen Colonies, when the Constitution was laid down.

Today in 1936, like Aquila, I live on a new England farm. But where he was certainly 90 percent self-sufficient, it is dubious if I am 10 percent. The ratio has been reversed.

We are dependent for our material livelihood on the whole United States, and to a lesser extent, on the whole world. My neighbors who still farm their land are not, at the widest estimate, 25 percent self-sufficient. As for the workers in the cities about us, their self-sufficiency is practically zero. They grow nothing and make little which they themselves consume.

The prospects for security tend to grow worse. The steady march of invention is constantly increasing the threat of technological unemployment. The alarming breakdown of traditional capitalism makes the future of all investments highly speculative. Thus, whether we live by work or by absentee ownership, we know not from what quarter a blighting wind may blow.

The village moralities of Aquila

are in my blood, but I cannot employ them without the taste of hypocrisy in my mouth. Regard, for instance, the imperative of hard work as the way to independence and success. Certainly hard, conscientious work is a virtue, but we must be exceedingly careful in assessing blame until we are first sure that there is opportunity to work. Probably nine-tenths of the unemployed today are so because they have been hit by a social earthquake, rather than because of innate laziness.

Again take thrift. When capital was scarce, pecuniary thrift was indeed a virtue. Now capital is so abundant that opportunities for profitable investment are far short of our national savings. The unspent savings block the operation of the financial system.

And so we come to one of the most obstinate of moral prejudices —belief that government must stay out of business; must let the individual work out his own salvation. Governments, we have been taught, are corrupt, inefficient, burdensome, dictatorial, and obnoxious.

Does this mean that public business is by nature corrupt and unworkable? The American public school systems, the British Civil Service, are all the answers we need. Governments are corrupt if powerful groups are interested in corrupting them and if nobody is interested in maintaining their integrity.

But if the government as agent for the community is not to be trusted, who is to be trusted? Big Business? The Utilities? Mr. Morgan? The record shows that they have not the slightest interest in the task. For 50 years they have been busy increasing the margin of insecurity, primarily through their operations in the stock market. Voluntary cooperative associations might increase security if they had generations in which to develop, as in Denmark and Sweden. We cannot wait a generation.

Nominate your coordinator. I care not who does it, so long as the task is well done, but for myself, I see no candidate on the horizon save the government.

What can the community do for me that I cannot do for myself? It can—

1. Help me find a new job if my old job evaporates or the community can employ me in some division of public works or services.

2. Guarantee me and my family an adequate minimum flow of food, clothing, and shelter in the event that no jobs can be found or in the event of my disability through illness or old age.

3. See to it that industry is operated at something near capacity.

4. Conserve land, water, and mineral resources.

5. Stimulate the arts of civilization through more and better education, public health services, research facilities, recreation areas,

libraries, museums, art galleries.

We have an enormous amount of public business today, of which education is perhaps the outstanding exhibit, and it is accepted without protest. The field is already divided. I ask that it be divided once more so that the community can do those essential things for the individual which he cannot possibly do for himself.

So much for theory. Looking at the world about us, we find governments the world around entering business in the dimensions of a landslide.

The National Association of Manufacturers has "ganged up"—to use the words of one of its own leaders—on government in business, and especially on the New Deal. The oratory is impassioned, and the theme song is: "Throw the government out." Suppose the government accepted this rhetoric at its face value and got out of the tariff business—a pleasant little dole which manufacturers have been enjoying for 50 years and more? The mind reels at the cries of anguish. The National Association of Manufacturers would move heaven, earth, and hell to get the government "regimenting" imports again.

A conservative calculation shows that 51 million Americans, or some 40 percent of the entire population of the country, are now dependent on the government for all or a part of their income. In other words, government has been driven into the business of providing two families out of five with jobs or with sustenance.

Lifting our eyes from America, we see the same trend toward collectivism the world around. It apparently makes little difference whether radicals, conservatives, fascists, tories, or socialists are in power—the community, operating through the state, is assuming more functions and more power. This should put us on our guard in attributing the trend to the machinations of any particular philosophy, or any particular group.

Great Britain is frankly anti-socialistic and under tory governments has cast off the gold standard, has collectivized electric power, much agriculture, radio broadcasting, and certain large housing projects, while its social legislation is a generation ahead of ours.

Sweden has collectivized more than half her economic life, partly by government control and partly by cooperative associations. She has accomplished the transition to collectivism without revolution, class warfare, dictatorship, or the surrendering of parliamentary government, free speech, free press, free assemblage.

New Deals are in progress in Australia, the Argentine, Mexico, Uruguay, Canada, New Zealand, Turkey, South Africa. The Japanese government is the largest producer of steel in the empire. Private

capitalism, free competition, rugged individualism are in full flight all over the world.

What the final pattern will be nobody knows. All we can say definitely is that if we are going to keep science and the machine, it will have to be through a collectivist pattern where the community guarantees jobs and economic security, where the community plans for the nation as a matron plans for her household.

Let the old and stubborn men go on mumbling about an unchanging Constitution, the virtues of pecuniary thrift, and balancing the budget. We who realize our country's need have more important work to do. We have to find the maximum of freedom consistent with universal security.

I can only tell you what general measures I am interested in furthering:

1. The nationalization of banking and credit.

2. The use of the income tax to redistribute income and purchasing power, so that savings will be spent.

3. The use of government credit to create vast new industries in the sector of public works and services.

4. Progressive control by the government of natural monopolies.

5. The insurance of the food supply through collective controls of agriculture, of which the AAA was the forerunner.

6. The establishment of wage and hour controls, region by region, industry by industry, to the end that every worker receives at least a decent minimum standard of living for working reasonable hours.

7. The intensive encouragement of ways and means to protect and inform the consumer; the encouragement of the consumers' and farmers' cooperative movements.

8. The rapid extension of social security legislation—old-age pensions, mothers' pensions, health insurance.

To some such program we must come, or be driven, by the breakdown of capitalism, to far more dictatorial, intolerant, and obnoxious forms of collective control. Government is in business to stay, and our task is to make that business as just and decent as is humanly possible. It is no longer a question of collectivism versus individualism, but of what kind of collectivism.

[*Stuart Chase is a well-known economist and author. Reported from the* Journal of the National Education Association, *XXV (March, 1936), 71–75.*]

THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM

JOHN DEWEY

In the Social Frontier

I AM not especially fond of the phrase academic freedom as far as the adjective *academic* is concerned. It suggests something that is rather remote and technical. Indeed, it is common to use the word as a term of disparagement. But the reality for which the phrase stands has an importance far beyond any particular expression used to convey it. Freedom of *education* is the thing at issue—I was about to say at stake. And since education is not a function that goes on in the void, but is carried on by human beings, the freedom of education means, in the concrete, the freedom of students and teachers: the freedom of the school as an agent of education.

The inclusion of students in the idea of freedom of education is even more important than the inclusion of teachers; at least it would be if it were possible to separate the two. Freedom of teachers is a necessary condition of freedom for students to learn.

I referred in an earlier article to "free schools" as the aim to which the American people are historically committed with a devotion that probably exceeds that given to any other aim in our common life. The full significance of free schools is, however, far from realization in the public mind and in the workings of our educational system. Freedom from payment of fees, support by public taxation, is a necessary condition for schools that are to be free of access to all. This aspect of free schools has been extended to free textbooks, free libraries, and, in some public schools, to free dental and medical service and free lunches for those who cannot pay—at least it was so extended until the depression led heavy taxpayers to limit these services.

But in final resort, these manifestations of freedom are tributary to freedom of education as the social enterprise in which education forms character and intelligence. There are plenty of restrictions put on moral and intellectual freedom of education within the school system itself. But there is one that is especially dangerous at the present time. It is the attempt to close the minds, mouths, and ears of students and teachers alike to all that is not consonant with the practices and beliefs of the privileged class that represents the economic and political status quo.

The question of teachers' oaths is so familiar that I refer to it only by way of illustration. Since our Constitution provides for its own change, though by awkward and cumbrous methods, and since it expressly reserves to the people (as

well as to state governments) all rights not conferred upon the federal government, and since this reservation of rights to the people includes the right of revolution when conditions become intolerable—as both Jefferson and Lincoln have pointed out—a teacher need have no conscientious scruples in taking an oath of loyalty to the Constitution. But the selection of teachers as the class of persons who must take the oath is socially serious because it is one phase of the general movement calculated to prevent freedom of education in all matters that relate to economic and political conditions and policies.

In no phase of social endeavor is the realization of the social content of freedom more important than in the struggle for academic freedom. Everyone who has read the pleas made in the early struggle for universal and free schools in this country knows the emphasis that was put upon education as a necessary condition for creation of the kind of citizenship indispensable to the success of democracy. Today freedom of teaching and learning on the part of instructors and students is imperatively necessary for that kind of intelligent citizenship that is genuinely free to take part in the social reconstructions without which democracy will die. The question is now whether democracy is a possible form of society when affairs are as complex and economic power is as concentrated as today. Since freedom of mind and freedom of expression are the root of all freedom, to deny freedom in education is a crime against democracy. Because academic freedom is so essentially a social issue, since it is intimately bound up with what the future citizenship of the country is going to do in shaping our political and economic destiny, it is not surprising that those who either give only lip-service or who openly strive to restrict it, should also strive to present it to the public as a matter that concerns teachers only as individuals, and to represent those active in supporting its cause as more or less unbalanced individuals who want more liberty to assert their personal views.

It cannot be denied that there is at present an unusually large number of young people who find themselves deprived of opportunity in the present situation, who find their legitimate desires and aspirations so blocked that they have become converts to the idea that social change cannot be effected by democratic methods, but only by violent force. The idea sedulously cultivated in the Hearst press, but not confined to it, that this attitude is the result of teachers' imposition of subversive ideas under the camouflage of academic freedom, is laughable to all those who know the facts about our schools. This attitude is the product of the restrictive and oppressive effect of the present industrial system, aided by a school system which

discounts the value of social intelligence. The feeling that social change of any basic character can be brought about only by violent force is the product of lack of faith in intelligence as a method and this loss of faith is in large measure the product of a schooling, that because of its comparatively unfree condition, has not enabled youth to face intelligently the realities of our social life, political and economic.

From lack of understanding of social affairs, owing to faulty education, as well as to deliberate refusal to learn, reactionaries unintelligently resist change. Those who have suffered from the old order then react by appeal to direct use of force as the only means at their command. Because of the intellectual suppressions experienced in the course of their own education they have little knowledge of means of effecting social changes by any method other than force.

In short, the social significance of academic freedom lies in the fact that without freedom of inquiry and freedom on the part of teachers and students to explore the forces at work in society and the means by which they may be directed, the habits of intelligent action that are necessary to the orderly development of society cannot be created. Training for good citizenship is one thing when conditions are simple and fairly stable. It is quite another thing when conditions are confused, complicated, and unsettled, when class divisions and struggles are imminent.

Every force that operates to limit the freedom of education is a premium put upon ultimate recourse to violence to effect needed change. Every force that tends to liberate educational processes is a premium placed upon intelligent and orderly methods of directing to a more just, equitable, and humane end the social changes that are going on anyway.

[*John Dewey is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy in Residence, Columbia University. Reported from* Social Frontier, *II (March, 1936), 165–6.*]

ITALY has cut the school day for its five million elementary children down to three hours with classes from 10 to 1, all in order to save coal for the war. Children above the age of 11 are subject to army call and a 30-hour military course is compulsory.

THE SCHOLAR IN AN AGE OF CONFLICTS

CHARLES A. BEARD

WHAT is the primary function of the public school system in American democracy? It is, as I see things, the training of minds and the dissemination of knowledge —knowledge useful in the good life, in the conduct of the practical arts, and in the maintenance of American society.

There are many, no doubt, who deny this conception of public education. They look to the schools to correct all the ills of humanity. Society creates conditions that foster crime; the schools must serve as crime prevention agencies. Parents quarrel and fight at home; teachers must make saints of children so trained at the fireside. Such views of education run counter to my notion of its duty in American society. The teacher's principal business is the training of minds and the dissemination of knowledge.

For the training of minds a trained mind is required. For the dissemination of knowledge a mastery of knowledge is required. The union of the trained mind and knowledge makes scholarship.

What then are the qualities of the scholar—of the trained and well-equipped mind? Of the qualities required in the sphere of the physical sciences I certainly should not venture to speak. But out of some experience as a student and teacher in the sphere of the humanities I hazard an opinion:

The first quality of mind required of a scholar in the humanities may be described as judicial. The spirit of the judicial mind is the quest for truth. The judicial mind tries to look deeply into every subject in hand, and all around it. The good judge, as Justice Holmes once said, must listen to things that are shocking and hateful to him as well as to the pleasing and the gratifying. He must confess that he is not God endowed with omniscience. He must give all parties their day in court.

Unless mankind is to surrender to utter irrationality and blind partisanship we must concede that the quest for truth in this spirit is indispensable. And having taken this position it is incumbent upon us to preserve and defend it as one of the obligations imposed upon the scholar as teacher. If the public schools are to aid in preserving American society against the fruits of unreason and the sneer of cold command, then they are compelled to assert and defend the judicial spirit, the scientific temper, against passion and tyranny.

If knowledge disseminated in the schools should be useful in the good life, in the conduct of the practical arts, and in the maintenance and improvement of Amer-

ican society, what kind of knowledge can be deemed to possess these utilities? Surely it must be accurate, realistic, and relevant, not false and fantastic. It must be comprehensive knowledge.

At once elements condemned as "controversial" by the thoughtless are introduced into instruction. How could it be otherwise? Does anyone believe that there could be a true history of the United States that does not deal with the great issues of banking, tariffs, taxes, agriculture, industry, and labor? Surely no intelligent American believes that European history should be deliberately falsified by omitting all reference to communism and by teaching, as one school persecutor has urged, "only the geographical facts of Russia."

Such perversion of instruction in the schools is more than a betrayal of knowledge and truth. It assumes that knowledge and truth are of no importance, that a nation can live by lies and deception. It is not an outgrowth of patriotism, as alleged. It represents an effort of partisan interests to intimidate the schools for their own ends.

Individuals and cliques wrap the American flag around their shoulders, proclaim themselves to be the only true, wise, and honest patriots, and then demand that the schools accept their versions and commands. Propagandists of every variety direct their fire upon teachers. All over the country schools are attacked by highly organized and well-financed minorities that seek to browbeat legislatures, the Congress, schoolboards, and teachers. It seems that we have reached a point where educational liberty can no longer be taken for granted. The precious values of liberty and scientific inquiry are threatened with extinction, and with them the principles upon which democratic government rests.

With Europe turning to a tyranny more frightful than that against which the founders of the American Republic waged war, with voices crying that liberty is a delusion and brute force a virtue, a crisis is upon us. Already in large sections of Europe teachers prostrate themselves before the possessors of sheer power won by assassination and intimidation. Already the drill sergeant, aided by the yellow press, is abroad in our own country, seeking to terrify, malign, and dominate schoolboards and teachers.

Drifting is perilous. Divided and trusting to luck we may be overcome by belligerent minorities. United we can defy powers that seem omnipotent. Let us study the problem. Let us clarify our minds. Let us rededicate ourselves to the American tradition of liberty and to the faith that error

need not be feared where reason is free to combat it. Let us assert anew against brute force the values of scientific inquiry, of fair hearing and fair play, and uphold them by fearless and united effort. For only thus can the American democracy cope with its gravest problems under the forms of law, thus maintaining amid the wreck of parliamentary institutions, East and West, the example of a nation that has not lost its head or its heart.

Charles A. Beard is a well-known author and historian. Reported from an address before the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association, February 25, 1936, at St. Louis, Missouri.

IN a number of English schools pupil exchanges and foreign travel are undertaken. The majority of these visits take place in the summer holidays for a period of two weeks upward.

The number of exchanges arranged this year was about 600, the largest number being with France. Germany came next, followed at a long distance by Belgium, Switzerland, and Spain. In these exchanges the principal object is linguistic but they do serve another purpose. Living in a foreign family a pupil is brought in contact with a different race, different habits of life and thought, his whole horizon is widened, and he acquires a new attitude towards other nations.

Group exchanges often try to combine some educational advantage with a holiday, the pupils attending classes in the school they are visiting and living either in the school or with the families of pupils of the school.

The London secondary schools have for the past two years arranged an exchange of this kind with the Berlin high schools. A party of Berlin pupils will come to London in July. It will be divided into three or four sections, each section attending a London secondary school for instruction during part of the day. The pupils will live in the homes of London pupils and at the end of the visit they will be accompanied back to Berlin by a London party. In Germany the English and German pupils will live together in a school, part of the time being spent in organized instruction.

From "Pupil Exchanges and School Journeys in English Schools" by G. R. Parker in the International Education Review, *V (January, 1936), 44–6.*

WAR AND PEACE

In the Living Age

EVER since Baldur von Schirach took charge of the education of German youth, all juvenile literature appearing in Germany has been serving the preparation for war. The *Neue Tage-Buch* tells us that at least 95 percent of all new juvenile titles are war books: *Flying in the World War, Experiences on the Sea-Front,* etc. For older children there are "Writings in the Spirit of Defense." Yet until recently the whole thing lacked system.

But now, at last, in the fall of 1935, teachers are being supplied with material in convenient form. From the new titles let us pick a few representative ones: *Material on Military Defense for Instruction in German History*; *Mathematics and Defense Athletics.* The latter book is described in the introduction as being for secondary schools; the work claims to give youth character and technical as well as physical education. The book deals with the measuring and estimating of distances including the measurement of sound, with problems of trajectory (hand grenades) and gunnery, with map-reading and topography, etc.

Perhaps the most interesting of the new German schoolbooks is that which bears the title *School Experiments in the Chemistry of War Materials.* It contains a comprehensive discussion of all poison gases used in modern warfare. Instructions are given for experiments designed to make the students familiar with the various kinds of poison gas. The thoroughly expert character of the text is indicated by the fact that it was written in collaboration with a large phosgene-manufacturing company in Hamburg.

The author himself, a Dr. Kintoff, declares that the book has filled an urgent need: "Among those who in case of emergency will have to take charge of homeland defenses," he says, "will be our students of 15 to 18 years, who are not yet ready for military service. We must train them for this defense work. This can best be accomplished by means of a thorough introduction into the chemistry of war materials."

Thanks to this new textbook, German school boys undoubtedly will acquire a considerable knowledge of the use of poison gas. Former generations of teachers admonished lazy students with the Latin proverb: "We learn not for the school but for life." Hitler's youth of today are studying not for the school but for death.

[*Reported from* The Living Age, *CCCXLIX (January, 1936), 456.*]

VARIABLES AND CONSTANTS

CHARLES SWAIN THOMAS
In the English Journal

SOME variables in teaching English come to light as we recall the different panaceas that from time to time have played their little part upon a transient stage, retreated later into the shadowed wings, and now lie forgotten in the dusty corner of the storeroom. The first of these pedagogical panaceas that I remember was known as the "object lesson." It lived and flourished in the classroom before my own teaching days; but I have a vivid recollection of hearing James Whitcomb Riley, as he humorously exposed the weakness of the procedure by holding a peanut daintily in his hands and dramatically and satirically showing just how a real educator "from the East" could employ a method that would revolutionize "the educational systems of our land."

We all clearly remember those optimistic days when the balmy breezes blew happily over the "project method"; but now that phrase, too, has lost some of its pristine succulence and is no longer regarded as a sole means of rejuvenating an ignorance-infested world.

We still have in our midst a good many major variables of more or less favorable repute: the Dalton Plan, integration, correlation, articulation, fusion, the unit, the contract method, and group instruction.

Moreover, we may include in our list of variables a multitude of devices and activities for special and occasional commandeering, such as: visits to museums, libraries, and industrial plants, magazine displays, phonetic drills, spelling contests, objective testing, floor talks, auditorium exercises, dramatic productions, photoplay appreciation, colloquia, seminars, language games, précis-making, travelogues, the school paper, club activities, "better-speech" programs, prize-speaking declamations, "panel" discussions, forums, debates, symposiums, radio broadcasting, phonograph recording, poster displays, and the speaking choir.

Now one striking fact about our enumeration of variables is this: Each item has its due quantum of intrinsic worth in English classroom procedures. Assuredly we should not in certain specific situations hesitate to employ the vitamin particles of any single one of them that promises mental nutrition.

All the while that we were engaged in this consideration of the nimble and temperamental and oscillating variables we have been subconsciously aware of the stable and stalwart constants. I shall present only certain ones that seem of special significance in our current concept of English teaching, recording them as a series of prin-

ciples rather than methods, devices, or procedures.

And the first in the series of constants is this: *We shall insist upon giving habitual concern to the sector of practical English—"practical" English as distinguished from "artistic" or "esthetic" English.* I lay stress upon the practical with conviction and I stand firmly upon the principle that the larger portion of our expended energies in English teaching must rest upon the broadly extended base of the practical, for it is there that we meet the workaday needs of every individual pupil.

What percentage of your pupils will ever be capable of interpreting the subtleties of literature? And how many of your pupils will ever write notable prose or highly distinguished verse? Comparatively few. Our major task in the ordinary school is to teach all pupils to read ordinary matter with ordinary intelligence and to express ordinary thoughts with reasonable clarity.

My second constant is phrased by a longer postulate: *English instruction is a complete unit of work, but it has two main divisions: one centers its energies in the development of the necessary series of correct automatic responses; the other uses these correct automatic responses, these automatisms, in creative or functional reading and in creative or functional expression, both oral and written.* Now we need never hope that complete mastery of automatisms can ever be secured; we can, however, focus our energies upon teaching and learning the essentials—those technical items which we and our pupils are most likely to need in creative reading and in creative expression.

A third important constant is this: *Our English course—our work in composition and our work in literature—should embody experiences which are, with certain limitations, analogous to the expected general experience of life.* The principle here expressed is of the very fabric of all educational doctrine. Whether we say that school is a preparation for life or assert that school is life itself, either notion alters not the deeper connotations of our postulate.

My fourth constant is a mere truism—almost a cliché: *English teaching must continuously keep in mind the individual differences in pupils—and teachers and communities.* Individual differences among our pupils demand that the menu constantly present offerings varied enough to meet the tastes, the talents, the stages of achievement, and the stage of mental maturity of pupils.

Here is my phrasing for my fifth constant: *Effective instruction in English demands from the teacher a sensitive and intelligent response to the changing ideas of the world. He should be especially alert and intelligent in his appraisal of new movements, new proce-*

dures, and new techniques in the field of education.

With the next enumerated constant there will, I trust, be full agreement. *There is a close relationship between language and thinking, and the implication of this relationship should be clearly and habitually revealed in our classroom practices.* By collecting a half-dozen expository or argumentative paragraphs or sentences where there is fallacious reasoning we can show specifically how writers or speakers have erred in their thinking. Conversely, by selecting a carefully organized piece of writing we can reveal the fact that the sturdy structure is secured by careful prevising, by close articulation, and by lucid expression.

Still another constant of significance is this: *We must somehow develop in our students an attitude of genuine respect for the English language.* We have not yet succeeded in creating among Americans that high spirit of reverence for our language which the English feel for their English and which the French feel for their French. Most of our boys and girls are unwilling to express their ideas in the choicer manner; they fear the withering glances and taunts of their classmates.

The last constant in my selected list is this: *The study of English should constantly administer to the demands of the spirit's inner life.* In his reading each student may vicariously share the experience of the authors or of the characters whom the authors portray. The facts that he learns and the experiences that he meets on his imaginary journeys are all the while making their impress; and it is our responsibility to see that this impression is of the proper hallmark.

There are, moreover, exceedingly high potentialities in composition work. There are possibilities of arousing in our students a genuine pride in their craftsmanship; or an ambition for a fuller and more revealing expression of the sensory and the emotional experiences of the day; a keener eye for the humorous or a quickened passion for an honest recording of personal doubts, or longings, or convictions. All these are but the articulate manifestations of youth's search for truth—truth that is white-lighted, severe, and unassailable.

Charles Swain Thomas is Professor of the Teaching of English in the Graduate School of Education, Harvard University. Reported from the English Journal, *XXV (February, 1936), 101–13.*

FAILURE IS TOO COSTLY FOR THE SCHOOL CHILD

BRUCE B. ROBINSON
In Parents' Magazine

MODERN education believes that the primary interest and responsibility of the schools is the personality development of the pupil. A child is receiving a worthwhile education if he is obtaining help in developing such desirable traits as self-confidence, self-respect, maturity, social ability, wide and active interests, self-control, and a feeling of security. No school practice should be allowed to continue which obviously interferes with the development of these traits.

The average parent and the average school seem to consider failure as something to be taken for granted, and as something calling for no defense on the part of the schools. The average failure rate throughout the United States is 10 percent of pupils enrolled. The average failure rate in the first grade is 20 percent.

When a child fails of promotion, the schools seldom discuss with the child or his parents the whole reason for failure and the basis for their belief that repetition of grade is the best solution of the problem. If some reason is sought by the parents, the schools usually reply, "He didn't do the work." Seldom are the parents given evidence that the school has made a reasonable attempt to find out why the child did not do the work.

Sometimes the parents are told that failure was necessary because the child had slow learning ability and, therefore, was unable to do the work of the grade. The parents might well ask, then, whether the school knew at the beginning of the term that the child had slow learning ability and, if so, why a slow child was compelled to take the work of the regular grade although there was every reason to believe that he could not do it.

Sometimes it is said that the child is "lazy" or "fools all the time" and the teacher and the principal believe that the disgrace of failure will act as a spur to effort. Here again the parent must ask why this so-called "lazy" behavior appeared. Clinical study of bright children who are "lazy" or not interested finds that the cause can often be traced to psychological difficulties in home or school relationships and that repetition of grade is seldom if ever the proper treatment for the child's condition.

If the cause of failure is announced as trouble with one subject, the parent is justified in ask-

ing whether repetition of all the other subjects which the child passed satisfactorily will not have a discouraging effect far greater than the possible value of repeating the work in the one subject.

Clinical studies of children who have failed show that there is a loss of self-confidence and self-reliance. The feeling of security, so necessary to mental health, is usually materially weakened and feelings of inferiority are increased.

The child is on the defensive when he meets his companions and in school he is separated from his "gang." Interest in school is replaced with a feeling of resentment against authority which may show itself in aggressive or regressive behavior. He knows that his parents are disappointed in him and his brothers and sisters are likely to tease him about the disgrace of failure. This creates a family problem that calls for the best efforts of the parents to handle successfully.

The child who fails in the first grade has come to school feeling proud that he is grown up enough to attend school. His parents have shown interest in his school progress and a strong desire for his school success. He is deciding whether it is really worthwhile to be grown up and have added responsibilities, and whether going to school is really the enjoyable experience which he was led to believe it was. If school is to be worthwhile to him, he must achieve success. He must find interest and occasional thrills in work which is neither too easy nor too hard.

But suppose that this child ends his first term or his first year with failure. Will he then be proud of being grown-up, or will he wish that he were back again in the security and protection of the home?

Is not the normal development of the personality traits mentioned above threatened by the experience of failure at the age of six? Is not failure obviously too heavy a blow for one so young and for one still insecure as a pupil?

A program of regular promotion is being tried in many up-to-date schools. Such a program does not encourage the child to put forth no effort, nor does it mean that the work is made easy. On the contrary, the child puts forth a maximum effort because the work is adapted to his interests and abilities and so seems worthwhile. Moreover, he has the thrill of success and the educational advantage of completing a project which seems important to him.

This year the experiment of regular promotion during the first three years of school is being tried in New York City. The first reckoning will come at the end of the third year when pupils who

have accomplished a specified amount of work will be promoted to the fourth grade. Those who have not will be placed in transition classes until fitted for the next grade.

When a school system has progressed to the point where it fully accepts regular promotion, there is a change in the attitude of both teachers and pupils. Marks and promotion cease to be the center of the educational universe. Discipline in the classroom becomes easier because the children are living at school under a policy which allows them to be human beings even in the classroom—with the result that the hum of activity and interest replaces the deadly silence of repressive discipline.

It will doubtless be some time before all schools adopt this progressive approach to education and remove the fear of failure from the hearts of their pupils. Transition classes, individual assistance or tutoring, and smaller classes must be worked out if regular promotion is to be a success.

Few schools give adequate consideration to the problem of failure. When a school does recognize it as a serious problem and gives the matter the thoughtful consideration it demands, the failure rate drops markedly.

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WITH public school enrollments increased by 34 percent, the total number of school buildings showed a decrease of 13.3 percent for the same 19-year period according to the U.S. Office of Education. The number of buildings reached its peak in 1915 when 277,941 were reported of which it is estimated more than 195,500 were one-room schools. By 1933-34, the latest for which national data are available, the total number of buildings decreased to 241,428.

The decrease in number of buildings in face of the increase in enrollments is due to a number of causes including the movement of farm population to the city where children are taught in larger schools and the development of good roads which facilitates the transportation of rural pupils to large consolidated schools.

THE BESETTING SIN OF PEDAGOGY

EDGAR B. WESLEY
In Social Studies

THE typical practitioner of an art or profession regards his predecessors with respect. Doctors are more likely to praise the physicians of past generations who made discoveries and contributions, instead of emphasizing their ignorance and incompetence. The architect freely admits the greatness of the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans.

There is, however, one profession that has slight curiosity about its past, that acts as though the law of continuity were nonexistent, that regards itself as created anew with each generation. Each practitioner of this art is fond of discovering all the fundamentals for himself, of setting at naught the skills, techniques, and methods of his predecessors, of relying wholly upon his own experience. I refer, of course, to the teacher. Four types of evidence prove that the profession as a whole is scornful of its past and pursues a course of assumed self-sufficiency.

First is the widespread practice of coining new words and phrases and of infusing new meanings into old terms. While many terms belong to a technical vocabulary, others are apparently designed to promote particular viewpoints, to persuade rather than clarify, to give the impression of newness rather than designate well-known ideas. In the organization of material, for example, we have subjects, correlation, concentration, articulation, integration, fusion, topic, problem, project, and unification. The coiner also gives us such phrases as core curriculum, partial fusion, etc.

Some recent educators have discovered the fact that the schools were designed for the pupils. Pupil activity, creative projects, self-chosen tasks, initiated problems, purposeful activities have been discovered, recognized, and labeled, in apparent ignorance of ancient and modern practices of a similar nature. Hundreds of worthwhile projects of former centuries could be cited. In the eighteenth century Basedow had his cook fashion the Greek alphabet out of gingerbread cookies. The pupils could eat those they identified. One promising pupil ate as far as *Iota* the first day. It is doubtful if contemporary educators have devised a more satisfying project.

The difficulty of a continuous stream of new terminology arises when one wishes to communicate with another. The result is frequently a series of misunderstandings or an extensive verbal glossary. The cause of this growth in vocabulary seems to be ignorance of the fact that previous educators have wrestled with similar prob-

lems, and found current words to convey their pedagogical ideas.

The second type of evidence is the derogatory comparisons which are so frequently drawn between present and past practices. It seems difficult for the progressive teacher to realize that his predecessors also tried to organize materials clearly, to motivate the pupil, to discover apt and unique devices for presentation.

The philosophy of "progressive education" seems to rest upon the assumed discovery of the true nature of the child and upon the implications of this discovery. One who is skeptical of the advantages of modern improvements finds himself in the awkward position of advocating an "unnatural" instead of a "natural" curriculum; a "slavish" instead of a "free" atmosphere; an imposed "task" instead of a "freely-chosen project"; an "illogical" instead of a "psychological" organization; and a "fabricated confusion" instead of "real-life situations." Thus progressive education scores a verbal victory.

A third reason for saying that the teacher defies his past is to be found in the reports of committees and conferences. Ignoring the fact that the art of teaching is rather old and that a study of it might throw some light upon how to achieve success, national committees have furthered the notion among teachers that the way to learn *to teach* history is *to study* history. "Know your content and method will take care of itself" has been said so often that it no longer elicits thought.

My fourth proof is to be found in the general attitude of teachers toward the history of education. Repeated surveys of the teaching of this subject indicate its decline, its unpopularity, its futility. This condition may be due to the poor preparation of the professors of the history of education, to the poor quality of the content, or to the lack of pertinency in the content. It is fairly clear that the history of past teaching does not function in the practice of the typical teacher.

This neglect of the historical approach to teaching is the besetting sin of pedagogy. What values might repentance and regeneration have? The study of the methods of great teachers, of past activity programs, and past devices might afford valuable suggestions.

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THE SCHOOL AS THE CENTER OF THE COMMUNITY

NATHAN PEYSER*

In the Journal of Educational Sociology

IN the prevention of juvenile delinquency we must attack before any overt evidence of criminality crops up. "The fundamental factor in delinquency prevention is the development of socially adequate behavior patterns, proper ways of living, of wholesome personality and character attributes."

But what agency can do this? The answer is not that there is *an* agency, but that *all* agencies in the community must work together to achieve this end, and that the school should be the integrating and motivating factor—because the school has access to every home in the community; because its nonsectarian, nonpartisan nature gives it the confidence of all groups; and because it is regarded as an integral part of community life.

The plan for delinquency prevention operating in Public School 181, Brooklyn, was formulated by the author during the years 1914–15, when he was principal of P.S. 39 in East Harlem, at that time considered the most serious delinquency zone in Greater New York. When transferred to the position of principal of P.S. 181 he carried with him this conception of the place of the school in the community.

At P.S. 181 the first step was the formation of a Mothers' League, divided into fifteen committees to deal with such problems as relief, social welfare, preschool child health, teacher cooperation, and parental education. For the necessary financial support there was a membership fee of one dollar. This League secured the following aids to the community: a health center with a fully equipped dental clinic under the care of two dentists and a hygienist; a clinic for infants and preschool children; a nursery school with a staff composed of a nutritionist, child educator, nurse, and teachers; and the cooperation of the neighborhood doctors and druggists to the extent that no family need go without medical aid while waiting for the unraveling of the red tape found in all organized charities. In the field of parental education a child guidance clinic and classes dealing with child problems have been formed. Afternoon classes for mothers in home economics, interior decoration, and child hygiene are being held. Dramatic and music groups have been functioning since the beginning.

A Mens' League has been formed and has been working on a street safety project in cooperation with the Automobile Association of

* As told to L. Louis Labiaux.

America. Dangerous street crossings have been brought to the attention of the police and a system of traffic control installed.

Out of all this has grown the supervisory body known as the Flatbush Community League, made up of the Teachers' League, the Mens' League, the Mothers' League, and the Junior Service League. This Community League is the coordinating factor between the school and the community, and its success can be seen from the fact that membership registered 1,200 adults last year.

For three years this organization has conducted many activities, raising its own funds and even paying for the use of the school building. It was not until April, 1935, that the plan was recognized by the Board of Education and the school officially designated the community center and opened to the community without cost between the hours of 8 A.M. and 11 P.M. Now the plan is being instituted in many other schools in the city.

During the latter half of the 1934–35 school year the Flatbush Community League had in operation 23 classes in adult education, ranging in scope from languages, music, and drama appreciation to civics, typewriting, and low-cost food production. The community symphony orchestra gave a concert, a play was staged, a choral society formed, and the Flatbush Community Little Theater became a reality. The Civic Forum met regularly, holding debates of which the most famous concerned socialized medicine and was attended by nearly every physician in the community.

Working in close cooperation with the school itself is the Mothers' Council, composed of two mothers from each class in the school. If, for instance, a class is to go on a field trip to inspect some industrial process, certain mothers arrange for the excursion with the proprietor of the concern. Others go with the teacher to assist in handling the children.

Within the school itself various projects are in the course of development—a nature-room museum, a new library, a school farm and garden. These things, however, do not indicate that the plan has reached its goal. Rather, with increasing monetary aid from the Board of Education the program of interaction between school and community will broaden and expand. As a result, the people are approaching a closer understanding of the school's work and problems and are becoming more eager to cooperate and support the program.

How do we justify this extension of the school's activities? It should not mean that the present staff should assume the additional burdens of afterschool activities. The program will necessitate the employment of additional teachers,

supervisors, and leaders trained especially for community service. And we are told not to ask for additional funds in these times.

In answer it is possible to point out that in times like these we spend for the detection and punishment of crime eight and one-half times the sum we spend for education. Will anyone question the wisdom of utilizing part of that money on a community program which will be a 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year fight, not against crime, but against the causes of crime?

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EVERYONE is a consumer and the curriculum might well be organized on the basis of consumer activities as well as producer or income activities.

The chemistry classes might profitably spend some time analyzing such articles as face creams, toothpastes, and other everyday products used in the home. These analyses would disclose not only the contents but also the quality, defects, and dangers of such articles.

Wood shop classes might well occupy some of their time in teaching the student how to select furniture and how to judge a house from the standpoint of construction materials.

Testing of household electrical appliances should certainly be a part of the work of electric shop classes.

Every home economics department should have a course designed to teach wise and efficient selection and use of food and clothing. Many progressive departments have gone much further in their training for intelligent consumption.

The social studies and commercial departments have a splendid opportunity to share in the training of the consumer. The wise use of money as it relates to savings, investments, and insurance and the problems of credit buying, budgets, advertising, prices, and marketing should be included as a part of the curriculum.

[*From "The Schools and the Consumer" by Ray G. Price in the* Journal of the National Education Association, *XXV (February, 1936), 48–50.*]

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF RECENT CHANGES IN FARM POPULATION

HAROLD H. PUNKE

In the Elementary School Journal

CHANGES in farm population growing out of migration and natural increase during recent years are particularly significant. Migration to and from farms seems to be a barometer of agricultural prosperity. The farm population decreases when attractive economic opportunities appear elsewhere and increases when farming seems more attractive than other vocations.

Each of the five years of 1930 to 1934, inclusive, showed a marked increase in the farm population. Contrary to the common belief, the total migration to the farms was no greater during this period than during the years immediately preceding. The actual totals are, for the 1930–34 period, 6,700,000; and for the 1925–29 period, 7,700,000. But during the depression there occurred a sharp reduction in the movement of population from the farms. Most of the recent increase, then, has been due to an accumulation of young adults on the farms who, under conditions prevailing a few years earlier, would have migrated to the cities. O. E. Baker, of the United States Bureau of Agricultural Economics, estimates that in the late summer of 1934 there were probably 3,000,000 such young people "backed up" on farms. He adds that these young people are having children and that the number of children on farms is now increasing.

Before the depression the farm population was decreasing. Through migration it was being drained of young adults; and partly because of this drain and its influence on the birth rate, there was a decreasing percentage of children and an increasing percentage of old people in the farm population.

At present the composition of the farm population is quite different from what it was before the depression. Warren S. Thompson's recent studies, although his estimates differ from Baker's, are in accord with the above statements:

"It is interesting to note that from one-half to five-eighths of our total natural increase is now found in the farm population, although this group constitutes just about one-fourth of the total population. It is probable that on January 1, 1935, the farm population was about 32,750,000 . . . an increase of about 2,600,000 since 1930, most of which was due to the natural increase of the farm population being kept at home because of lack of opportunity in the city. Since 1930, for the first time

in our history, the proportion of our people on the farm has begun to increase."

The most typical agricultural sections, the South and the Middle West, showed marked increases in births in the farm population during the three years 1932–34. On January 1, 1935 the three southern geographic divisions had a farm population of 17,805,000, as contrasted with a farm population of 15,003,000 in the other six geographic divisions. Thus the South, with about 30 percent of the land area of the United States, has over half the farm population. Moreover, 61 percent of the total net increase in the farm population from 1929 to 1935 was in the South. In this section of the country, furthermore, the percentage of children in the total population is highest.

To sum up: Before the depression both the number of persons on farms and the percentage that the farm population was of the total population were decreasing, but now the number of persons on farms and the percentage are increasing. Moreover, the farm population has changed from one with an increasing proportion of old people and a decreasing proportion of young adults and children to the exact opposite. In the urban population, on the other hand, the average age is advancing more rapidly than before the depression because of a low birth rate and a small net migration of young adults from rural communities.

It is generally known that the urban birth rate is insufficient to maintain the urban population. If the population is to be numerically maintained it will apparently be maintained by the rural sections, and particularly the southern rural section.

The farm population, it has been shown, is supplying more than half the natural increase in population in the whole country, and the natural increase among the farm population of the South is more rapid than in any other section. The educator, then, who wishes to understand the kinds of homes from which the majority of rural school children in the next generation will come should try to picture the farm homes of the South at the present time.

Illiteracy in the rural South, among both races, is higher than in the nation as a whole. The wealth per capita is low, the school terms short, and, with the exception of Maryland, the states of this section spent in 1930 for education from one-third to two-thirds as much per pupil as was spent per pupil in the country as a whole. The percentage of the population of 7 to 20 years of age which is attending school is lower for all the southern states, except Oklahoma, than the average for

the country. Baker states that "the average value of farm dwellings in the South in 1930 was . . . less than half that in the North. Only one farmhouse in 25 in the South has electric lights and only one in 30 a bathroom."

Among the farm population of the South, where the natural increase is highest, the standard of living is, in general, lowest. Children who come from such homes have no opportunity to learn at home a great many things which children learn in homes with higher living standards. Thus the trend in population growth places a demand on the schools for a more comprehensive program of formal education, since we are beginning to recruit most of our next generation from the strata of society that needs to have a great deal done for them by social and educational institutions.

A further implication of the types of population change discovered relates to the support of the school program. If the farm population increases, with a resulting increase in competition among the members of the industry, there will appear a lowering of the economic status of the farm population which will reduce, even below its present level, the ability of rural areas to support education. If the children of these areas are to secure adequate education the federal government will have to provide it.

Furthermore, federal support for rural education, whereby urban communities help pay for the educational program of rural communities, should not be given on the basis of charity but on the basis of economic justice and social safety. The migration of young adults to the cities, after they have been reared and educated, results in economic drainage of the country for the benefit of the city. As a matter of self-protection, the cities should be interested in the education provided for their future citizens during their childhood in the country.

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IN Detroit in the elementary schools definite scholastic marks have been eliminated in favor of *E* for excellent, *S* for satisfactory, and *U* for unsatisfactory. Pupils will be graded on such qualities as self-control, cooperation, reliability, initiative, and adaptability.

EDUCATION FOR CULTURE IN AN AGE OF SCIENCE AND MACHINERY

ARTHUR B. MAYS

In the School Review

SCHOOLS ultimately reflect the general concept and ideal of culture held by the people. A change in this concept is a slow and difficult process, and much damage is wrought when such change lags too far behind the facts of life.

Most of us have too easily accepted a concept of culture which was born during the decadent phase of the Renaissance and grew out of an earlier, necessary emphasis on literary skills and appreciations. Its classic definition is that of Mathew Arnold who spoke of culture as "a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world; and through this knowledge turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits." Arnold placed the emphasis on knowing what has been thought and said, not on what has been done nor on what is being done, said, and thought. He said of American life: ". . . so the university . . . seems to rest on a misconception of what culture truly is, and to be calculated to produce miners, or engineers, or architects, not sweetness and light." From this statement one must conclude that the daily work of the world has nothing to do with culture, and culture cannot be found in that phase of a person's life.

There is another way of looking at culture. Dewey wrote that "there is perhaps no better definition of culture than that it is the capacity for constantly expanding in range and accuracy one's perception of meanings." That definition does not pinch nor bind, nor does it confine culture to a dead past. It makes room for the daily work and man's social activities, as well as for his own perfection in sweetness and light.

To produce such a culture, the school must enlarge youth's understanding of the vital social, economic, political, and spiritual problems of today. It need not solve these problems; but it must point out, analyze, and interpret them, and train youth in the wisest methods of considering and attacking them.

A modern person of culture must be able to understand and to participate in a constantly changing civilized life, which is conditioned by the attitudes and the facts of modern science and by the activities and forces of modern machine industry. Hence, education for culture today means education which does not fail to

train youth to understand modern science and to utilize it intelligently. Every program of studies which aims at true culture will include a comprehensive overview of the growth and range of scientific inquiry in all the major divisions of science; an intensive study of one of these divisions, at least to the point of a thorough training in its fundamentals; and a special and careful study of the interpretation of the growth and findings of science in terms of living happily and well in the modern world.

Modern civilization is characterized not only by unprecedented achievements in science, but also by the ubiquitous activities of that most lusty child of science, modern machine industry. Indeed, machine industry is far more characteristic of our civilization than is science. Most of our greatest achievements have been in industry, and our major social, economic, and political problems are results of its developments. However, there is an appalling ignorance of its real character and significance. We are lead to believe that the machine is some monstrous invention of the devil foisted on an unsuspecting race of children who are being ruthlessly crushed, without power of self-defense. That man's mechanical genius has through the ages been his chief means of social and spiritual progress is entirely overlooked. That civilization itself is chiefly the outcome of the invention of tools and machines is usually forgotten.

The greatest danger in the present age is not that scientific discovery will greatly increase and that machine industry will develop rapidly, but that man, in his slavery to educational tradition, will continue to fail fully to incorporate the rich educative materials of science and industry into the program designed to prepare youth to live and manage modern life. The schools can no longer safely ignore the study of machine industry as a means of cultural education. Many schools are enriching the courses offered in their industrial-arts departments, but the surface has scarcely been scratched. These courses should be brought nearer the center of the school program and should be thoroughly integrated with other phases of the curriculum.

[*Arthur B. Mays is Professor of Industrial Education at the University of Illinois. Reported from the* School Review, *XLIV (February, 1936), 95–99.*]

STRANDED CHILDREN

FRANCIS BIDDLE

In the National Parent-Teacher Magazine

IT is little short of tragic that so many thousands of intelligent citizens, both men and women, have not yet grasped the fact that the government alone is unable to take care of hundreds of thousands of children who have been left stranded in the backwash of the depression.

Continually we hear misinformed people assert their belief that all children in need of any kind of help are being cared for under the Social Security Act, the Emergency Relief Administration, or the National Youth Administration. Believing that, they have given no further thought as to how children are faring, and are astounded to learn that over and above the 300,000 in foster homes and institutions, and another 300,000 in their own homes under mothers' aid, there are more than half a million orphaned, destitute, homeless, and neglected children in serious need of care and protection. These are children who must be cared for outside their own homes and therefore are beyond the reach of government provision.

Upon whom, then, must these children of the depression rely for help? The only sources through which their compelling needs can be adjusted are the child-caring organizations of the United States, and these in turn must rely almost entirely upon local funds and public and private philanthropy. Owing to the stringent years through which we have lately passed, the ability of these agencies to help these children has been gravely crippled, and sometimes their efficiency has been impaired through inability to retain trained personnel.

It may be argued that it is the duty of the federal government to see that the physical, mental, and moral development of these children is not retarded or endangered. The government has poured out millions of dollars in order to relieve distress, to make work for the unemployed, and to restore purchasing power. The annual appropriation for assistance to children, to be administered through the U. S. Children's Bureau, amounts to $8,150,000. None of this, however, is available for the direct support of destitute children, except certain crippled children. But the government cannot assume entire responsibility for the welfare of all unprotected American children, and thereby relieve us of all further thought and anxiety or activity in their behalf. I cannot subscribe to that outlook on life which regards human distress

as inescapable, and believes that suffering, even for children, may have good effects in the long run.

Who are these half million improperly cared-for children? To list just a few types: There are the orphaned with no one of their own to turn to; the motherless, where the father perhaps does his utmost but succeeds in making less than half a home; the fatherless, where the mother is trying to be both breadwinner and homemaker and the children are under working age. There are the children born out of wedlock, who require special protection and whose mothers need help. There are the neglected children, those whose homes are immoral and depraved, and who must be removed from them. There are the dependent, who should be placed, not in poorhouses, but in proper institutions. There are also those dependent who should be placed in foster homes; some one must find good foster homes for them. There are the children of families on relief where the father cannot find work and the mother is sick; something must be done for these children.

Everyone interested in the welfare of children knows that for 50 years or more efforts had been successful in getting needy children out of the poorhouses and into proper care. Yet owing to present conditions hundreds of children are being sent back to poorhouses to live with the senile and feeble-minded; are being returned to homes which are unfit and from which child-caring agencies had taken them; and are in correctional institutions because there is no other place for them. This is a dangerous backward trend.

The child-caring organizations have recognized the urgent need of focusing public attention upon this crisis in the lives of so many children, and the Child Welfare League of America, together with its member agencies, has accepted the responsibility of rallying public interest to help repair this damage to helpless childhood and to assure children care, protection, and a chance for normal development. The Child Welfare League of America is a federation of 160 leading child-caring agencies and institutions in the United States and Canada. It is a clearing house of information, experience, and methods for such organizations. It serves as adviser of federal, state, and local governments; and is the only agency with a national viewpoint and experience.

[*Francis Biddle is a lawyer and prominent citizen of Philadelphia. Reported from the* National Parent-Teacher Magazine, *XXX (March, 1936), 22.*]

THE AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE

EDGAR DALE

In Educational Screen

MAY I say at the outset that there is nothing novel about the idea of a "Film Institute." The necessity for a clearing house of information and techniques has been obvious for years, but the difficulty has been one of getting sponsorship for such an institution, and adequate financing. The American Council on Education, of Washington, D.C., a nongovernmental agency, has taken the sponsorship of this activity. Modest preliminary grants of funds have been made by the General Education Board and the Payne Fund. Several conferences have been held on the problem.

The five objectives stated for this institute are as follows: (1) to collect and distribute significant information concerning the motion picture in education, at home and abroad; (2) to stimulate the production and use of the motion picture for educational purposes; (3) to promote the cooperation of the agencies interested in the use and production of motion pictures for educational purposes; (4) to initiate and promote research pertaining to the motion picture and allied visual aids in education; (5) to develop a national appreciation of the potential contribution of the motion picture to cultural life.

There is a tremendous amount of significant information which is not being collected and distributed at present. First of all we need data concerning the extent and character of the use of visual aids in the schools. One of the striking things that one discovers as he visits various centers is the fact that in almost every one there will be persons who have developed specialized skills or techniques that are not generally known. I have long believed that a prime necessity in American education was to have scouts going around to the various schools and finding excellent techniques and excellent teachers, and then spreading the word. The list of some 10,000 persons interested in visual instruction which is a result of the National Motion Picture Survey will go far in giving us persons to whom to go for information and guidance in this field.

One of the most important things we must do is to begin adequate teacher training in the field of visual aids. We have a very unfavorable showing on that score. Of some 35 leading teachers' colleges to which I recently wrote almost none were offering any instruction in the use of visual aids. Most of our training will have to be given to teachers in

service through institutes and demonstrations.

In the matter of research, Dr. Charles Hoban has already evaluated the 49 major research studies in this field. Obviously it is necessary to set up additional ones. I should like very much to see these new studies emphasize objectives not hitherto emphasized—for example, the possible value of motion pictures as a device for changing attitudes. It has been shown clearly that the theatrical film does influence attitudes. How powerful is the typical classroom film in developing this sensitivity to problems? There needs to be a much closer integration of films and slide materials with the curriculum. If these materials are valuable, their use cannot merely rest with the whim and caprice of the teacher.

I believe that during the past two or three years there has been developed a profound belief on the part of the people of this country in the influence of the motion picture. But I am convinced that as a rule our principals and superintendents are not up to our ablest parents in their thinking in this field. Many parents report to me that they have had unsatisfactory interviews with principals and superintendents. One state chairman said they had even offered a projector to a school principal and he had refused it. A superintendent in a western city objected to one of the finest teaching films I have ever seen because the children would enjoy it. It was too interesting, he said. The National Congress of Parents and Teachers through its publicizing for visual instruction has developed a very favorable attitude on the part of the parents. The weakest link in the chain lies with the principal and superintendent.

[*Edgar Dale is head of the curriculum division in the Bureau of Educational Research, Ohio State University. Reported from* Educational Screen, *XV (March, 1936), 79–81.*]

PRIOR to 1905, according to George F. Zook, only 10 percent of the young people of high school age were actually enrolled in high school. In 1915 the percentage increased to 20; in 1921 to 30; in 1923 to 40; in 1930 to 51.5; in 1932 to 58, with a total enrollment of 5,592,872. It is estimated that in 1935, 7,169,000 or 70 percent of young people of high school age were enrolled in the secondary schools.

EDUCATION FOR SAFETY IN AMERICA'S SECONDARY SCHOOLS

SIDNEY J. WILLIAMS

In the Bulletin of the Department of Secondary-School Principals of the N.E.A.

THE practical problem of safety is that accidents in this country kill about 100,000 persons and injure about nine million every year, with a direct economic cost of over three billion dollars. It is common knowledge that most of these accidents are preventable. The safety movement has already gone far enough to prove over and over again that accidents are preventable in the individual case, and that in the aggregate they can be greatly reduced by simple, practical measures.

Practically all accident causes trace back finally to some individual. The individual traits which cause accidents fall into three groups: first, defects of mind or body; second, lack of skill or experience; third, a wrong attitude, which we call carelessness and which really means lack of forethought or of social responsibility. The quality of safety thus breaks down into these three basic qualities—fitness, skill, and attitude or character. Are not these basic qualities the very aim of all education?

As a practical matter, what should the secondary school attempt in the way of safety education, with due regard to its many other burdens? To answer we must ask: In what ways are our students likely to suffer or cause accidental death or injury, now and later?

Many people are hurt while at work. If you train for any manual vocation, surely safety must be a part of that training. Vocational training is essentially training in skill, but sometimes you need a little more emphasis on attitude. The boy should know that if he runs a circular saw in a modern industrial plant with the guard off he is likely to lose his job as well as his fingers.

Many people are hurt in sports and recreations. The close relationship of safety and skill has no better example than the record of accidents in football and other games —which are far more common in sandlot games than in those under high school or college coaching.

The beginning driver is usually in high school. To see that he gets started right is obviously the opportunity and in part, I believe, the responsibility of the secondary schools. The elementary schools have done a splendid job in teaching safe pedestrianism.

Finally, many people are hurt at home. The number of deaths from home accidents is almost as great as in traffic, and much greater than in industry, and the number of injuries at home is greater than in traffic and industry combined. Common-sense precautions against these home accidents there-

fore should be included in any high school safety program.

Because safety includes skill, it should be recognized in all vocational or manual arts courses, including physical education.

Because safety is also a matter of attitude and character it should be considered in those courses that deal with character and social relationships, including courses in citizenship or government.

While skill in running a circular saw has little to do with skill in driving a car, the safety attitude—the feeling of personal and social responsibility—is common to everything we do. Therefore, on the side of attitude the whole safety program should be integrated. This is the reason for organizing a high school safety council, or a safety committee of the general student council.

I believe that automobile driving is the most important of the manual arts, and must be so recognized. And driver training is probably the most difficult single item for the high school to handle. It is difficult because automobile driving is a new art, about which none of us knows very much, and because it does not fit easily into the present curriculums.

We have called the students together and talked to them about safe driving. No doubt these lectures have done some good in arousing a feeling of responsibility, but they do not constitute driver training. We can't teach driver training without cars. And both cars and instructors are difficult to get.

As for the cars, the automobile industry has become so interested in the problem of traffic safety that it would, I think, be quite generous in helping any high school that was ready to put in a real driving course.

As for the instructors, Professor Amos Neyhart of Pennsylvania State College has been teaching groups to drive for years, and has worked out a definite technique. What we need is a hundred Amos Neyharts, testing this technique, perhaps improving it, and crystalizing it into manuals of instruction. The task of driver training cannot be given as a 5 percent overtime job to someone employed to teach English, history, or football. If the teaching of driving is really as important as the teaching of cooking, then we need a special instructor for the one as for the other.

Sidney J. Williams is Director of the Public Safety Division, National Safety Council, Chicago.
Reported from the Bulletin of the Department of Secondary-School Principals of the National Education Association, *XX (March, 1936), 18–26.*

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MRS. CHASE GOING WOODHOUSE

In the National Elementary Principal

THE idea expressed in the title needs some explaining. Naturally there is little room in the elementary school for vocational guidance in the narrow sense of the term. However, we cannot begin too soon with the task of teaching the youngsters all they should know about the world of jobs and their relation to it. Every lesson in geography offers an opportunity to mention occupations; literature brings out many illustrations of the environment in different lines of work; and the discussions of current affairs found in many sixth grades involve men and women in various kinds of jobs.

Certainly the elementary school is the place to start an interest in fields of work, to arouse curiosity in the child about occupations, and to develop in him the desire to ask questions and to know.

But even more important is the inculcating of good social attitudes toward work and the eliminating of false social evaluations of different kinds of work. As I check over the young women who are now looking for clerical jobs, as I come in contact with them on certain work-relief projects trying to do stenographic work, I wonder why we in education have done so little toward removing the stigma of domestic work and factory work and deflating the "white collar" field. Girls with limited social backgrounds, with limited language facility and limited general ability, with personal appearance and habits not acceptable in office work, are struggling to join the army of workers in the field where they cannot meet the competition. What can we, the educators, do to restore the real democracy of work, to develop social attitudes which will enable each person to do the work for which he is best fitted and be happy in it, not humiliated by false social standards? This would be vocational guidance of the most socially useful sort.

Closely related is the use of the cumulative record card. Of course, we agree that there are not, as yet, any tests which will enable us to determine precisely at what occupational level a child should aim, but we do have tools which tell us something of general intelligence and aptitudes. Such information added to carefully kept records of marks, achievements, activities, and teachers' comments, listed from time to time from the first grade on, provide us with a guide to the occupational potentiality of each child. When the time comes to decide which high school a child should attend, here is the evidence on which to base the answer and,

if necessary, on which to seek financial aid. Shall it be the technical or the academic high school? How many students have specialized help in making decisions—decisions which will have great influence in the shaping of their future lives?

One cannot leave any discussion of vocational guidance without mentioning the need for more work with the parents; it is they with whom the chief discussions on social attitudes toward jobs must take place. They must be given some intelligent approach to the understanding of the child's record as an indication of his abilities and potentialities. This is not an easy task, but the elementary school is better equipped than any other educational unit to do it. If this understanding by the parents of "fitting the job and the youth" can be forwarded just a little, the elementary school will have taken the most needed step toward a real vocational guidance in our communities.

[*Mrs. Woodhouse is Managing Director, Institute of Women's Professional Relations, Connecticut College, New London. Reported from* The National Elementary Principal, *XV (December, 1935), 83–84.*]

THE Southern Conference, made up of the universities of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Sewanee, Tennessee, Tulane, Vanderbilt, Auburn, and Mississippi State, took a progressive step at its December meeting in Atlanta when it voted to recognize athletic ability in assigning financial aid to students.

However, this was only an acceptance of a de facto situation. The chief iniquity has been that usually athletes were given financial aid sub rosa in violation of the rules of the conference to which member schools were pledged.

The amendment says: "Athletic ability should receive consideration in determining students' values and in the assignment of scholarships, loans, and opportunities for remunerative work, with the understanding that such assistance shall never be granted primarily as a reward for athletic services."

[*Reported from the* Mississippi Educational Advance, *XXVII (March, 1936), 135.*]

THE RELATION OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO EDUCATION

FREDERICK E. BOLTON
In School and Society

THE relation of the federal government to education is not well understood by the public in general. The erroneous assumption is often made that, because the federal Constitution does not expressly mention education, it was by implication left to the several states. That conclusion is wholly illogical and unwarranted. Vast numbers of matters were not mentioned in the Constitution. For example no word is uttered regarding the establishment of public highways. They were once a local government enterprise. But, as travel necessities demanded, the sponsorship of highways was extended successively from local road districts to township, to county, to state. And today the federal government determines the location of many highways, contributes funds for them, and supervises their construction. There is not the remotest hint in the Constitution that such developments might transpire.

Similarly with public education. Many assume that the omission of all reference to education in the Constitution was intentional and that the framers definitely intended to delegate this function to the states. Dr. Cubberley, who has studied the framing of the Constitution, very critically asserts that this was not the case. It was primarily because education at that time was almost wholly private and therefore no one thought of giving it consideration as a public function.

Of one thing we are certain—the federal government is in education. In accordance with the Ordinance of 1787 Congress gave to Ohio the sixteenth section of land in every township for the maintenance of schools, and similar grants were made to all states subsequently admitted. A total of 145,000,000 acres of these National Land Grants have been donated by the federal government for the endowment of public common school education. Additional grants of two or more townships "for a seminary of learning" were the initial endowment of the state university in all new western and southern states. In 1862, for the endowment of colleges of agriculture and mechanic arts, each state was granted 30,000 acres for each of its representatives in Congress.

It is well known that for many years considerable amounts have been granted for such special phases of education as agriculture, industrial arts, education of Indians, home economics, etc. Under the terms of such laws as the Purnell Act, the Smith-Lever Act,

and others, the federal government contributes to higher education approximately twenty million dollars annually. In the present financial crisis it is contributing large sums for adult education and for the repair and construction of high school and university buildings. Under the National Youth Administration fifty millions are being spent this year to assist worthy boys and girls to secure high school or college education which they could not finance unaided.

Education is no longer a matter of local concern. Pupils in a given community may live next year in a state thousands of miles distant. Every state university is also a cosmopolitan institution, with students from every state in the Union. How can local levies provide equitably for these peripatetic pupils?

Then again vast numbers of pupils in the public schools and also in the state colleges migrate to other states after graduation. Eastern metropolitan areas especially are thronged with individuals who obtained their schooling in western states. Theoretically each locality and each state provides education only for its own future citizens. Since throngs of students do not render service to the state which has educated them but do contribute to the cultural assets of the nation as a whole, should not the federal government contribute to their education?

The principle of equalizing educational opportunities is becoming thoroughly established within the states. Some localities have many children and little wealth; others have great wealth and few children. The states are beginning to tax the wealth where it is and distribute it to localities where the children are. Why not the same principle among the states?

Another point, largely overlooked in most studies, is that many corporations are interstate in location—railroads, shipping, oil companies, power plants, chain stores, etc. Some plan should be evolved whereby the educational revenues derived from such corporations could be distributed equitably.

If federal revenues are allotted for the support of local education some degree of federal control will follow. There should be such control. But there should be real fear of bureaucracy. Central control of every detail of education, as in France, Italy, Germany, and Russia, must be avoided. The principle of local initiative must be preserved. Can we not, therefore, conserve the social values of the somewhat cumbrous heterogeneous organization and evolve plans for securing greater unity and efficiency without sacrificing either the much-needed assistance from the federal exchequer or the local

initiative necessary to the life of a democratic civilization?

Uncle Sam has vowed that every child, youth—and yea, every adult—shall have abundant educational opportunity. We must not be surprised if all our concepts of the hard-and-fast lines between states' rights and federal rights in education will be broken down in the interest of providing equalized and abundant educational opportunities for every individual. This is Uncle Sam's insurance policy in the interest of a better and finer civilization.

[*Frederick E. Bolton is Professor of Education at the University of Washington. Reported from* School and Society, *XLII (January 25, 1936), 105–11.*]

THE following, from the *Journal of the New Jersey Teachers Association,* is an example of the services which the citizen receives in return for taxes:

New Jersey government—state, county, and municipal—is costing less than $365,000,000 a year. That is $1,000,000 a day. It sounds like too much. *But* there are 4,000,000 people in New Jersey. That makes the cost of government to each of them approximately 25 cents a day.

Every minute of the day somebody dashes into the cigar store on the corner, drops a quarter on the counter, and shouts, "Hey, Bill, two packs of cigarets."

Nobody ever stops at the City Hall, hands out two bits, and says to the tax collector, "Hey, John, give me my day's supply of government."

But if you did, this is part of what you would get:

Police protection all day long, wherever you happen to go; a dozen or more firemen standing by all day, with their equipment, on a chance that your house will catch fire; a modern school building for your children, lighted and heated, with a carefully selected teacher, free textbooks, and supplies; playgrounds for those same boys and girls, parks and other recreational facilities for you; courts of law in which you can have your disputes settled; good roads; three men on a truck to collect your garbage; a sewage system; protection from communicable diseases; a large number of hospitals or homes to which you can turn in the event of extreme illness or poverty-stricken age; and an elaborate relief organization, should you find yourself absolutely "up against it."

All these things you get for the same quarter that buys the two packs of cigarets.

DEATH RATE FOR CHILDREN DECREASES

JAMES FREDERICK ROGERS
In School Life

TODAY, children 5 to 14 years of age have a 25 percent better chance to live than they did ten years ago. The Office of Education issued a circular in 1929 stating that deaths from typhoid, malaria, smallpox, diphtheria, dysentery, rabies, tetanus, pellagra, and rickets were practically all preventable; that, with better care of the sick and protection from infection, deaths from scarlet fever, whooping cough, mumps, and measles might be greatly reduced.

In 1925 over 8500 lives were lost from accidents in the ages 5 to 14, and over 3000 of these were due to automobiles. It was suggested that by putting into effect our knowledge of preventive measures at least 10,000 lives of children could be preserved through this age period in the next decade, reducing the death rate by 25 percent. In less than ten years the rate has been reduced this 25 percent.

Details of what has happened are not at present forthcoming, but we know that by active immunization against diphtheria a host of children have been saved. (Three thousand died of diphtheria in 1925.) Deaths from accidents have been somewhat reduced.

Just how much the schools have had to do with life saving we cannot say, but school medical inspectors have immunized a large percentage of their pupils against diphtheria. Parents have been present at the physical examinations of their children and have been advised concerning their care. Teachers are being trained to detect beginning signs of communicable diseases and are expected to exclude children who show such signs. Safety education and health information have had some effect in helping the child avoid conditions which lead to destruction.

Compared with other countries, Sweden, Norway, and Holland surpass us, and New Zealand, as a decade ago, is still far in the lead. But considering our conglomerate population, we are making progress, and if we could keep up our present pace, premature deaths between 5 and 14 would soon become a thing of past history.

The 1933 death rate in the United States from 5 to 9 was, boys, 1.7 per 1000, girls, 1.4; from 10 to 14, boys, 1.5, and girls, 1.1. New Zealand's rate in the same year was, ages 5 to 14, boys, 1.1 and girls, 0.91 per 1000.

[*James Frederick Rogers is Consultant in Hygiene of the United States Office of Education. Reported from* School Life, *XXI (February, 1936), 139–40.*]

STATE REQUIREMENTS THAT DISCOURAGE EDUCATED PERSONS FROM TEACHING

VIRGINIA C. GILDERSLEEVE
In the Educational Record

AN odd situation is developing in the teaching profession. Whether we attract the best type of human beings to teach in our public schools, and are able to select the best from among our candidates, depends largely on the requirements set up by the various state authorities for licenses to teach. Are these requirements now fairly good and getting better? On the contrary, they seem, on the whole, to be rather bad and to be getting worse. So that it looks as if it might become harder and harder to get educated persons to teach in the public schools.

This sounds so absurd that I must make it clearer by a concrete, imaginary example:

Suppose you are running a normal school in the small state of Blankdash, and have arranged your curriculum so that all your students take seven points of English composition, three points of hygiene, nine points of educational psychology, five points of ethics—and so on through a mainly prescribed four-year curriculum. Then suppose that, convinced of the soundness of your particular curriculum as training for teachers, you persuade the Blankdash State Board of Education to pass a rule that all candidates for licenses to teach in the high schools of Blankdash must have had, in their college or normal school course, seven points of English composition, three of hygiene, etc., etc., enumerating all the courses prescribed for students in the Blankdash State Normal School, but not prescribed, or indeed offered in just this form, in any other college or normal school in the United States.

When there is an opening for a teacher in a local high school obviously only graduates of the local normal school can qualify.

And obviously any young resident of the state of Blankdash who looks forward to teaching will probably go, not to the local college of Liberalia, or to Harvard or Bryn Mawr, but to the State Normal School of Blankdash.

I know of no actual instance quite so extreme as the imaginary one I have described, but the tendencies of the moment are certainly in that direction. The result is that *it seems to be rapidly becoming impossible for graduates of the best liberal arts colleges to teach in the public schools.* This is a pity.

The increasing requirement of professional work—theory of education, practice teaching, etc.—is due partly, no doubt, to the experience of school boards with incompetent college graduates who lacked a command of teaching

technique. Unfortunately, however, this large prescription of technical training is likely either to bar out young Bachelors of Arts altogether, or to force them to include in their undergraduate course so much professional work as to prevent their learning very much about the subject or subjects they expect to teach.

Another objectionable feature of the license requirements is the tendency—illustrated in my imaginary example—to prescribe very definite subjects and numbers of points or hours covering a large part of the four-year course. When the New York City requirements for the license in commercial subjects were announced a year or so ago Barnard College and the School of Business of Columbia University discussed planning a joint program to meet them. But it seemed too difficult. To meet them in her college course a student would have to know from the moment she entered as a freshman that she wanted to teach commercial subjects in a high school. Of course, this is generally quite impossible.

Another kind of example of the difficulty of meeting specific requirements is provided by the state of New Jersey, which recently demanded, among other things, that its high school teachers should have had *three points* of health education. Now it happens that Barnard College offers and requires of all its students a two-point course in hygiene, and offers no more. A Barnard graduate who wants to teach in New Jersey will have to go elsewhere and acquire somehow one more point of hygiene.

Curiously enough, this growing tendency against which I am protesting—the requiring of a lot of specific points or hours in certain subjects for licenses to teach—is just contrary to the newest and most approved educational practice. Many of the best schools and colleges have been endeavoring to stop merely adding up hours of "exposure" to instruction, and to set up instead tests of power and achievement. It would seem reasonable to expect in the profession of education itself some similar effort to test the personality, the power, the professional education, and the professional aptitude of would-be teachers. There are indeed a few attempts of this sort, but on the whole the drift seems to be toward the strangely detailed, "catch" requirements that tend to discourage educated persons from trying to teach.

[*Virginia C. Gildersleeve is Dean of Barnard College, Columbia University. Reported from the* Educational Record, Supplement No. 9, *XVII (January, 1936), 34–41.*]

THE INTEGRATION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND THE COMMUNITY

HOWARD A. CAMPION

In the California Journal of Secondary Education

VOCATIONAL education, whether in the high school, junior college, or trade and commercial schools, must be integrated with the activities of the occupations the students expect to enter. The resourceful administrator will find many ways of making his practical arts program more real and more capable of functioning in the student's future occupational life. The following procedures are suggested to bring about a closer community tie-up.

First, as an integrating agency, is the advisory committee of representatives from the occupation for which a vocational curriculum is to be constructed. Such a committee may assist in determining the content of the program and the fitness of the teacher, in selecting equipment, and in planning real jobs and projects. It can be a tremendous force in securing the support and cooperation of the industry or business it represents and in aiding when students are prepared for placement.

The California State Board of Education has sponsored a program of foremanship training. In every city, groups of minor executives have met in conference to discuss the problems of industrial leadership. Out of such discussions comes a sympathy for the vocational education program which may be easily converted into active cooperation.

A modest survey of the actual occupational conditions and needs of the community to be served by the school should be made, at least in part, by the instructors who will be responsible for the training. Too often a survey results in a mass of unused figures, left by an expert who takes away with him the more valuable observations and contacts of the actual field work.

Since it is difficult to learn to repair automobiles, build houses, or sell prunes without engaging in these activities, the highest integration will be achieved when the educational program is tied up definitely with a program of production activity. With the up-turn in business, it should be possible to work out part-time cooperative plans with business and industrial units.

Department and drug stores have conducted "student days," when students from salesmanship classes work alongside the regular sales force. While far less effective than the part-time employment plan, this device is an improvement over the training program that never extends beyond the schoolroom's walls.

Another plan is to secure the cooperation of business and indus-

trial leaders in providing actual production jobs to be done in the school. Thus, a garment manufacturer may send a portion of his work to the school where the vocational class in power sewing will make up his garments. If there is an association of employers in a particular field, an agreement may be worked out where each employer will furnish his share of production projects.

A vocational program should be continually revised to meet the new demand upon its trainees. To determine these demands the vocational instructor or coordinator should obtain first-hand information regarding the work and success of former students. One vocational school in California issues the diploma only after six months of satisfactory experience in the occupation for which the student was trained. During this six months, he is visited on the job at least three times. If he is not measuring up to the demands of the job, additional instruction or suggestions often will help him meet the requirements. Information on weak points in the program is brought back to the school and provides a basis for curriculum revision.

The value of any vocational program depends on the degree to which the graduates succeed. If an employer secures from a graduate intelligent and efficient service, he soon becomes an ardent supporter of the program and his assistance will be felt in many ways. He will recommend other applicants for work to the vocational class or school. He will, as a taxpayer and a citizen, support the program and be favorable to its expansion. He will welcome the school representatives and make available to them business information, useful in keeping the program abreast of a rapidly changing industrial world.

Every teacher of practical arts should have, in addition to his scholastic training, a background of actual experience in the business or industrial world. He should keep alive his contacts through membership in business organizations or trade unions. The day may come when he will be required, at least once every five years, to return to his trade or occupation for a sufficient time to become familiar with the new skills and devices.

Certain values can also be obtained through an open house to which employers and prospective employers, as well as the general public, will be encouraged to observe the students at work.

Howard A. Campion is Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Los Angeles, California. Reported from the California Journal of Secondary Education, *XI (February, 1936), 77–80.*

SIGNIFICANCE OF HIGH SCHOOL MARKS

G. H. Godfrey

In the Journal of Higher Education

STUDENTS who receive good marks in high school are likely to maintain a high standing in university or college; and it is only when there is a complete reorganization of study habits and general attitudes that those who are below average in preparatory school become really accomplished in college studies. This is one of the conclusions reached after an extended study of high school marks in relation to success at the University of Oregon made by Howard Taylor, Head of the Department of Psychology, and C. L. Constance, Assistant Registrar.

High school students, however, have no reason to think they need be unusually brilliant to have a good chance of being graduated once they enter the university. They should be able by a combination of well-organized study habits and definite scholarly interest, to earn some high marks in high school. If they have earned several A's, this indicates that they have learned how to study, and that, therefore, their chances of success are greater.

Getting down to hard facts, the study shows that a student who has four out of a possible 16 or 17 units rated "high-grade-year" has an even chance of being graduated from the university with the required C average. If he should come with the unusually brilliant high school record of 17 top-mark units, his chances of being graduated are 10 to one. On the other hand, if he has one or less highest units, the chances are four to one against him. The marking unit usually means the equivalent of from 90 to 100 percent.

"High school students, whether they realize it or not, are to a considerable extent laying the foundation for college success or failure in the habits of concentration and intellectual interest they acquire or fail to acquire, as well as in the extent to which they master various fundamental fields of knowledge," the authors state. Special stress is laid upon the acquiring of correct study habits: "Even very intelligent students too often find themselves incapable of vigorous thinking and consistent study after four years of 'just getting by' in high school."

Two practical uses for the tables and charts which accompany the bulletin are suggested. By pointing out these facts the authors suggest that "students who are unaware of the fairly close relationship between preparatory school and college scholarship can be helped to evaluate their ambitions in the light of their interest in the success with academic work in the secondary school.

"Students who are merely dawdling with their high school studies can be helped to realize the more or less permanent handicap for college achievement they are fastening on themselves."

[*G. H. Godfrey is a member of the staff of the University of Oregon. Reported from the* Journal of Higher Education, *VII (March, 1936), 160–61.*]

THE questionnaire is one of the minor manias of the present age. Five weighty documents lie upon my desk. Their turgescence has caused a bursting of the seams of their envelopes and their prying curiosity has caused a bursting of the seams of my sunny disposition.

By its devotees, the questionnaire is justified on the grounds that it is a branch of scientific research. But questionnaires are, to paraphrase Mark Twain, neither scientific, nor are they research.

The fellow who is so unfortunate as to receive one does no searching. He follows the line of least resistance, and fills the blanks with estimates, with whole-cloth guesses, and sometimes, if his gorge is sufficiently high, he fills it with sarcasm directed at the whole tribe of perpetrators of blanks and forms.

In spite of my confusion concerning the hazy elements of the long questionnaire form before me, I find a few tangible facts connected with it. It cost six cents to mail to me and six cents will be required to carry it back. I am supplied with the postage but no pencil or ink are sent with it. I must use my own writing equipment to fill it, and I must also use my time and concentration upon its queries. I can use the time for which the public is paying, but this time surely belongs to the school children under my charge. There are 420 spaces open to entry. While many blanks may be filled with a check mark, there are others that call for comments, elaborations, explanations, and descriptions.

This is the sort of thing which can hardly be laughed off as an innocent foible of the educator. It costs public money.

[*From "The Iniquitous Questionnaire" by John Girdler in the* School Executive, *LV (March, 1936), 256. Mr. Girdler is Superintendent of Schools, Kingman, Arizona.*]

WHAT EIDETIC IMAGERY MEANS TO CHILDREN

LEIGH PECK AND ROSEMARY WALLING

In Childhood Education

THE life-like pictures which the child's imagination creates for himself, more often pleasant than frightful, are known to the psychologist as "visual eidetic images."

We have all probably observed a young child's use of imagery in play. When our little neighbor goes fishing he carries a basket to hold his catch, and upon his return proudly exhibits the fish he has caught, though to any eye but his own the basket is empty. In the corner of the living room he finds an entire menagerie, and amuses himself parading the make-believe lions and bears. One young acquaintance, after a visit to the monkeys in the zoo, developed an imaginary tail, "a beautiful, long black tail," of which he was inordinately proud. He marched about the house, looking fondly behind him, and shrieked with pained indignation when someone shut the door "upon his tail."

Eidetic imagery is frequently exhibited in the creation of an imaginary playmate. Such imaginary playmates are very real to children. Sometimes their creation means that the child lacks real playmates, and in such case the parents should attempt to provide for the child more contacts with children his own age. Frequently, however, a child who enjoys an abundance of social play will at times amuse himself with an imaginary human companion. Such play does not interfere with social development.

We need feel no especial concern over the socially adjusted child's occupation with imagery so long as he himself realizes that the creations of his imagination are only make-believe. Sometimes, however, the images are of hallucinary clearness, and the child apparently has real difficulty in distinguishing fact from fiction. What is to be done with the child who reports to us earnestly that he has found a big, fierce lion in the yard? Before we brand him as untruthful, or decide on punishment, let us remember that the child really needs help in learning that his images are not to be taken as facts. To say cheerfully, "Yes, that's an interesting make-believe story you made up," or "Yes, we'll play as if the lion were there," informs the child that we recognize the imaginative element in his report, and helps him to make the distinction.

Only a small minority of adults are eidetic. Eidetic imagery is far more common among children, investigators finding it in from 37 to 50 percent of the children tested.

The method of testing is in it-

self interesting. The child is shown a series of attractive pictures, usually detailed silhouettes, each one being exposed for from 20 to 30 seconds. The child is then told to look at a neutral-colored screen and asked whether he can see the picture on the screen. An eidetic child can often describe from his imagery many more details than the adult examiner can recall from memory, and point out their exact location as accurately as though the original picture were still on view.

Most investigators have reported no correlation between imagery and general intelligence. However, though the eidetic child may be no brighter than his noneidetic companion, his imagery is often of definite advantage to him in the classroom. Certainly, learning to spell accurately depends to a considerable extent on the child's ability to visualize the words he is attempting to write. History, literature, and geography are made more vivid if the pupil can conjure up images of the scenes described. Imagery is of obvious advantage in art, or in any kind of creative work. Experimental work on the value of imagery in learning to read is now under way. Moreover, the possession of richly detailed imagery is in itself a pleasure to child or adult.

Children are often unaware of their ability to visualize until their attention has been called to their imagery in the course of an experiment. At present we cannot say positively that all or even nearly all children could, by conscious effort, develop vivid imagery. However, it does seem worthwhile to call the child's attention to the possibility of visualization wherever imagery would facilitate learning or would make recreational experiences a more lasting pleasure.

[*Leigh Peck and Rosemary Walling are on the staff of the University of Texas Nursery School. Reported from* Childhood Education, *XII (March, 1936), 261–63.*]

THE Superintendent of the San Francisco Schools, E. A. Lee, refuses to take action against children who object to taking part in the flag ritual. "Saluting the flag is part of the course in citizenship," he states according to *Highschool*, "but the object of the course is to make children love their country, not fear it."

HOW TO INCREASE THE LABORATORY EQUIPMENT

ELDRED R. HARRINGTON
In School Science and Mathematics

THE writer was an engineer and machinist before entering school work so naturally sought to supplement the inadequate physics equipment with some home-made apparatus. A systematic appraisal of the janitor's "junk room" resulted in the starting of several pieces of apparatus. Similar trips were made through the junk piles at other schools in the system, and finally our journeys led us to the local electric companies and the railroad shops.

Three burned-out motors were rewound, by the aid of a book. Step-down transformers were constructed from insulated wire wound on cores made from strips cut from stove pipes. These transformers furnished current at 12 and 20 volts pressure. A step-up transformer having a secondary voltage of 1200 was then made and was followed by a large welding transformer made in the school shops. The schools changed their bell systems, removing their old storage battery and rectifier system and replacing it by an alternating current system. The battery jars and rectifiers were pounced upon by the science department and the question of current, A.C. or D.C., is now solved.

One three-inch electromagnet made in the school shop has a lifting power of 200 pounds. It cost 18 cents. Choke coils, rheostats, condensers, and a Tesla coil followed. A sucking coil was wound and used to remagnetize a number of permanent magnets, dead after many years of use. The school shop contributed a pair of Magdeburg hemispheres, an air compressor, an air blower, a centrifugal pump, a steam boiler, and a model lifting crane. These are well built machines which will last for years and are first class examples of work done in our machine shop by our own students.

Patterns are made in the school wood work shop, castings in the experimental foundry, sheet metal work in the auto mechanics shop. The metal work classes have even cut down old brass door rods into 10-, 20-, 50-, and 100-gram weights, which have been standardized against corresponding weights of an expensive set.

The manual training department took lumber from packing cases to make test tube racks, and small pieces of wooden apparatus. The department also contributed a sonometer, a resonator for tuning forks, a color wheel, persistence of vision apparatus, and a table on wheels, which may be

pushed from one room to another as a demonstration desk.

Student radio "fans" have made the department two receiving sets and a sending set, from donated parts. A bicycle shop furnished a wheel which became a gyroscope, after being weighted by a lead pipe from a plumbing shop. We obtain our supply of horse-shoe magnets from the local garages, and one shop has even saved up iron filings for us. The business houses are very willing to do such things, and it lets them know we are alive.

Our cooperation system is not limited to the manual arts department and local shops. Practically no department of the school has been omitted. Our tests are typed and mimeographed by the commercial department, and they have shared with us their stop-watches and metronomes. The art department responded to our call for color charts and pictures for our persistence of vision machine. The music department has been called on frequently during the study of sound. The home economics department saves scraps of cotton and wool for the dye experiments in chemistry and felt scraps for the electrification of non-conductors. They have loaned their electrical apparatus for testing purposes and have baked the insulation on to some of our home-made electrical apparatus.

The printing department prints physics and chemistry experiments, repairs our books, and prints the rating sheets. Their copper cuts make good voltaic cell plates, and their zinc cuts are melted down and poured into water to produce mossy-zinc, to be used in making hydrogen.

[*Eldred R. Harrington is a science teacher in the Albuquerque High School, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Reported from* School Science and Mathematics, *XXXVI (January, 1936), 39–41.*]

WHAT word do high-school students the country over misspell most frequently? It is regrettable—and no pun intended.

Dr. Alice E. Watson of Teachers College, Columbia University, has just completed an experimental chart which is the result of a check of 55,000 misspellings, and "regrettable" won in a canter. Second place went to "calendar," usually spelled "calender." Other letter twisters were: "forcible," misspelled "forceable"; "likable," as "likeable"; "defiant" as "defient," and "referred," as "refered."—*Missouri Schools.*

THE LISTENING HABITS OF OAKLAND (CALIFORNIA) PUPILS

I. Keith Tyler
In the English Journal

In this study the following types of information were gathered: whether there was a radio in the home, the amount of time spent in listening, the favorite radio performers, the qualities of the radio performers that made the greatest appeal, the favorite radio programs, with whom the child usually listened, the types of programs that were best liked, what the child did while the radio was on, and the effectiveness of commercial radio advertising. Data were treated so as to discover sex differences, grade-level differences, and intelligence-level differences.

The author personally administered a questionnaire to 700 students in the high seventh, high ninth, and high eleventh grades, chosen because they represented a fair cross-section of the city as a whole. Students of average, high, and low intelligence were included.

There were radios in 98 percent of the homes from which these pupils came. This is a startling figure, indicating the universality of this new means of communication. In a recent article in the *Educational Research Bulletin* I have indicated my reasons for believing that this situation is not unique to Oakland, but that an equally high percentage would be found to obtain in most of the medium sized cities in the North.

The evidence is unmistakable that high school students spend a large amount of time listening to the radio. The whole group averaged 142 minutes each school day in the same room with a turned-on radio, and slightly more time on Saturdays and Sundays. Age seemed to bear no relation to the amount of listening, but girls of all ages spent somewhat more time than boys and the brighter students somewhat less time than the others. The difference in time between the low group and the high was only 20 minutes a day.

Here are the favorite stars of the group: (1) Bing Crosby, (2) Jack Pearl "The Baron," (3) Eddie Cantor, (4) Jimmie Durante, (5) Ed Wynn, (6) Myrt, of "Myrt and Marge," (7) Phil Baker, (8) Billy Page (a juvenile attraction), (9) Marge, of "Myrt and Marge," (10) Amos and Andy. Of this entire group all but one are stars of programs with mass adult appeal. The lone juvenile headliner is on the list chiefly because of the preference of the seventh-grade group; older children spurn such child programs.

When the preferences of the boys are compared with those of the girls, we find some interesting differences. Comedians take first place with the boys, while they are in second place with the girls, Bing Crosby being an overwhelming feminine preference. Among the boys' choices seven of the first eight were comedians, with Bing Crosby in fourth place. Among the girls' preferences only four of the first eight are comedians, the other four places being given to a crooner and three stars of short serial dramas.

"Humor" led overwhelmingly among the traits which were named as endearing their favorite stars to the students. With the girls it was slightly more popular than "a good singing voice," but the boys showed a 2.5 to 1 preference for it. "Acting" came in third place, with "music" following. Then came such trait descriptions as "interesting," "personality," "exciting," and so on. Altogether, the preferences were highly consistent with the types of stars that led in popularity.

Short plays were the favorite type of program of the whole group. Other types followed in this order: variety programs, sports, comedy, dance music, news broadcasts, crooners, vocal group singing, symphony, unclassified classical music, and, at the bottom of the list, talks. The appeal of the dramatic is clearly shown in these findings. Short plays are in first place among the seventh-graders; they tie for first in the ninth grade, and then drop to fifth place in the eleventh grade when other types are beginning to make a stronger appeal. But the type listed as "variety" is also preëminently dramatic in appeal, and it takes second place even in the eleventh grade.

The list of programs most popular with these adolescents is as follows: "One Man's Family," "Myrt and Marge," "Amos 'n' Andy," Jack Pearl, Associated Sports Broadcast, "Tarzan," "Globe Headlines" (a dramatic sketch—not a news broadcast), "Memory Lane," "Eno Crime Clues," and Jimmie Durante on the Chase and Sanborn Hour. With the exception of "Tarzan" all these programs were intended primarily for adults; yet they are the preferences of the high school students. "One Man's Family" was uniformly popular with the students. Realistic and sympathetic in its treatment of the Barbour family, it appeals not only to parents, for whom it is chiefly intended, but to youngsters as well. It is, I believe, one of the best examples of the possibilities for education by radio through the use of dramatic technique.

Data on the effectiveness of radio advertising with these young

people is largely subjective, but interesting nonetheless. The proportion which thought that advertising had no effect upon them ranged from 20 percent for "One Man's Family," at that time advertising Snowdrift and Wesson Oil, to 65 percent for Jack Pearl on the Lucky Strike program.

Most of these students, of course, listen with their families, but the proportion who listen alone, or with friends, increases steadily from the seventh to the eleventh grade.

The findings of this study point to the importance of radio in the life of the typical adolescent. There is a radio in his home, he spends a significant proportion of his time listening to it, and it is highly probable that it exercises a profound influence on his attitudes, his stock of information, and his standards.

These findings support the view that the adolescent must be appealed to more as an adult than as a child. He has already put away childish things; his favorite programs are adult programs. He is to be reached not by being talked down to, but by sympathetic guidance into the adult world.

A third conclusion that seems to me to be of educational significance is indicated by the overwhelming appeal of humor. I have still to hear an educational broadcast that evokes really hearty laughter from the pupils. Then there is the matter of the "good singing voice" which had such an appeal for the girls. Most music appreciation hours are occupied largely with instrumental numbers. A good tenor or two might add a great deal.

The program preferences of this group indicate that the dramatic approach is by far the most popular and that talking is least likely to meet a response. Nevertheless, talks still make up a large part of the educational broadcasts now on the air, and some of them are pretty dull.

The study reveals a relatively low level of taste in radio programs on the part of high school students. All in all, the popular programs were not good programs; many of them were pure hokum and slapstick. Further, the students seem quite susceptible to high-pressure radio salesmanship. Much needs to be done to develop in high school students the ability to bring critical judgment to bear upon the radio fare which is offered them, in both its commercial and its recreational aspects.

[*I. Keith Tyler is a member of the Bureau of Educational Research of Ohio State University. Reported from the* English Journal, *XXV (March, 1936), 206–15.*]

AMERICA MUST CHOOSE

ARTHUR G. CRANE

RADIO raises important questions affecting American education, culture, and the very existence of popular government. First, how can the best uses be made of it? Its inventors have given it the power of instantaneous mass communication; its social engineers must show the way to make it serve American culture.

Every broadcast, of whatever kind, educates its listeners; and American children listen an average of two hours each day. The public has placed the responsibility of leadership for children's welfare upon the educators. They must accept this responsibility, by making the radio supplement and reënforce the school's service, and not leave its influence to be determined solely by the good-will and self-restraint of the advertisers. Courageous educational broadcasters have led the way, developed the technique, demonstrated radio's contribution to school instruction. History, literature, science, music, world affairs, and the best in entertainment can reach all schools.

The chief menace to popular government, next to crass ignorance, is indifference to public issues. America is a democracy where voters' judgments determine the nation's destiny. We must have a system of broadcasting which will permit the people to listen to announcements of public business, to discussion of vital issues, and to the counsel of their officers.

New Mexico proposes a state broadcasting service for use by its educational institutions, and by its state departments of highways, police, public instruction, lands, public health, legislation, and general government. It will use this station for the education of its people, and use it not as a recipient of favors, but as a right. Wisconsin has made successful use of such a station for years.

Second, must public use of radio remain wholly dependent upon the generosity of private industry? The Postmaster General recently cited the diverse ownership of our 600-odd broadcasting stations as evidence that there is no monopoly of the air. He overlooked the fact that it is not diverse ownership, but monopoly control that is important. Through hook-up contracts two national companies control all affiliated companies for the blocks of time sold to chain broadcasters. These blocks of time absorb the greater part of all desirable listening time, as you can discover any night on your own radio.

The present advertising supported programs contain much

that is fine and valuable. Much free time is given to public users, but dependent almost always on the advertiser and the wish of the private owner of the air. School men should agree that public culture cannot remain wholly dependent on gift and favor for a public share in this common heritage. At one time school education in America was dependent upon philanthropy. Private schools have made and still do make welcome contributions to education, but America has declared that private gift would be inadequate and unsafe for all the schooling of a nation's children; and has exercised her right to control and maintain schools at public expense. Radio cannot safely be surrendered to private monopoly, however well intentioned it may be, and public welfare be made a suppliant for its good-will. If more time than can properly be given by private owners is needed for public use, it should be purchased by the public. America, although accepting educational contributions, does not ask private concerns to furnish free bricks to build her schools. America must provide a share of the air for public use.

Third, how can the greatest possible freedom of speech on the air be assured? The broadcasting officials claim the right of editorial privilege in allocating time on the air. They agree to allow broadcasting of political issues after the national conventions, but refuse to give or sell time before party platforms are set. Such power over public discussion cannot be safely concentrated in any hands.

The chain officials are in a tough spot. Since they monopolize the pie, they must divide it and there is not enough to go around. They must maintain maximum audiences of possible purchasers to insure advertising revenues. They must serve public interest, convenience, and necessity and also make the business pay. They must try to avoid censorship and yet have to exercise it in selecting the programs permitted on their stations. They must attempt the impossible reconciliation of these conflicting requirements.

A public program, paralleling present programs, would give diversity to safeguard freedom of speech, and, at the same time, relieve private owners of many embarrassing courtesy requests.

Fourth, can the world enter the schools only through the benevolence of advertisers? Private business cannot be allowed to exploit the public schools by buying its admission with attractive programs. Advertisers could just as appropriately be permitted to furnish free textbooks advertising their wares. America has safe-

guarded education. She can devise means to insure that radio shall contribute safely to mass education.

The National Committee on Education by Radio, composed of representatives of national groups of organized education, is now entering the sixth year of its program to promote and protect broadcasting for social purposes. The plan proposed by this committee calls for more educational, cultural, and civic programs, supplementing, but not supplanting, the present private programs. In fact, we now have such a combination of advertising and social broadcasting, but the public welfare programs are so small as to be entirely overshadowed by the advertising programs.

To enlarge public welfare programs, first, the educational broadcasters can be protected in their privileges. Other local non-commercial stations can be encouraged to start, modeled after those now in existence. Second, the best possible uses must be made of all present available resources. For school programs, it is fortunate that school hours are the less salable broadcasting hours. School superintendents and administrators must give attention to radio, study its technique, provide for it in school budgets, check its results, and exchange experiences.

The combination of local public broadcasts, a national public program, and our present advertising programs would be a simple and effective safeguard against the dangers of monopoly, either governmental or private. State, regional, and national boards would govern policies of educational and civic programs. Membership of boards would be diverse in politics, independent of private or political control, and interested in social values.

Any public use of radio will cost money, but if it will increase the efficiency of schools, will vitalize instruction, will make effective popular government, will gradually raise the culture of a nation, it will be worth it.

Dr. Crane is President of the University of Wyoming and Chairman of the National Committee on Education by Radio. Reported from an address before the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association, St. Louis, Missouri, February 27, 1936.

SHOULD THE TEACHER PLAY POLITICS?

D. L. Harrison
In Classroom Interests

FIRST of all, what rights does the teacher have as a citizen? Probably most teachers would consider that there could be no question regarding these rights. Yet there is some questioning at present about the wisdom of allowing public servants to vote, or to have any voice in government. The assumption is made that in this way those in public office could be restrained from activity or organization designed to perpetuate them or their policies in office.

The objections to this point of view are numerous, of course. The teacher and other public servants can point readily to the "constitutional rights in a democracy," feeling confident that the question is disposed of. This same reliance upon democratic principles may, however, embarrass him in other activities.

Perhaps even more significant is the claim that to deprive the teacher of his vote is to remove him from personal contact with public affairs. How then, it is asked, can the teacher successfully activate citizenship on the part of pupils?

If public servants were no longer active in influencing public opinion, would that same public find itself without self-appointed leaders? Actually there are a number of other agencies, and other leaders to carry on the work. There can be a grave doubt that such a method would produce the desired result unless carried to its logical conclusion of excluding all groups with "special interests" from public activity. It becomes immediately evident that the relatively small remainder could hardly be called the true voice of a democracy.

Should the teacher, individually, or as a member of professional organizations, attempt to influence or determine public opinion? Those who object to such activity point to the inevitable emergence of special-interest groups which exert undue pressure upon legislators and even upon public opinion itself. Such activity, in its evidenced form, is claimed to be undemocratic. Likewise, it is claimed that pressure groups tend to perpetuate the detrimental as well as the beneficial. The natural concomitants of such pressure groups are said to be seen in such things as "lobbying," "boss politics," "propaganda methods," and the like.

There is also a strong group of "opportunists" among educators and other groups in public office. This group objects to conspicuous political activity on the part of its

members. It feels that public opinion is often easier to initiate than to control; that once aroused public opinion is a veritable, and often destructive, boomerang. The policy of this group, however, calls for alert watchfulness and aggressive activity when vital interests are too seriously menaced.

A third point of view calls for united and consistent political activity on the part of educators. The adherents of this viewpoint claim that it is a function of the school to see that the state and community are properly organized and that the interests of each are properly served by its representatives. In this way only can the interests of the community and the school be safeguarded.

They point to the close affinity of the school and state in European countries and suggest that possibly the conditions of modern life make impossible the removal of school from politics. Judd, for example, calls on educators to unite on a national front for the purpose of formulating and guiding public policies.

There is wide disagreement about the attitude the teacher should take concerning politics and other controversial matters in the classroom. One widely accepted viewpoint contends that it is not the function of the school, nor is the school able, to present solutions for public problems. It points out that pupils should be taught to think for themselves and that they can acquire such abilities only through practice. The function of the teacher in such instances is to see that problems and evidence are introduced and, in an unbiased way, to present the principles and guidance necessary for problem solving.

A second viewpoint holds that it is not possible nor desirable for the teacher to remain neutral. Advocates of this opinion say that pupils are emotionally influenced by the opinion of the teacher in any event, and that it is better for this influence to be exerted in the clear light of reason. Some educators would go farther than this and contend that teachers are better prepared than any other group to point out solutions for our public problems. The person who has decided on a passive rôle may be equally intolerant. Actually, either line of action may be completely reasonable.

[*D. L. Harrison is a teacher in West High School, Denver, Colorado. Reported from* Classroom Interests, *XIII (February 17, 1936), 1–2.*]

WHO IS THE EXCEPTIONAL CHILD?

FRANK S. FREEMAN
In Educational Administration and Supervision

AMONG the principal types of exceptional children to be found in our public schools are, first, the gifted children; that is, those who are well above the average in general intellectual capacity, who are consequently bored in ordinary classes and thus encouraged in the habit of indolence. Psychologists differ as to just what level of superiority a child must attain before he should be called gifted. If we place the lower limit at an IQ of 125, then we shall have included the highest 3 percent of the school population, or at 130 the highest 1 per cent; but even 1 percent of our total school population would form a large army of unusual intellects, handicapped by a uniform, undifferentiated educational system.

There are many misconceptions of the gifted child, particularly of the child with an IQ of 140 or more. The facts are these. Mentally, the gifted mature more rapidly, their development continues for a longer time, and they reach a final mental level superior to that of the ordinary group. There are, of course, exceptions, where children are "late bloomers," so to speak, or where an early spurt carries them quickly to their maximum level, so they end up as average individuals.

Physically, the gifted as a group, are taller and heavier than the average and they do not suffer from ailments any more frequently than do ordinary children. They are not the sickly, nervous, undersized, timid, premature adults with large heads and inferior bodies, as some ill-informed writers would have us believe.

Competent investigations have shown that the gifted are very much like ordinary children emotionally, and that as a group they are not prone to psychopathic or abnormal behavior. If they are not too extremely gifted—IQ not above 140—they may and do become well-liked leaders in groups of ordinary children.

Today the abilities of the estimated 1,500,000 gifted children in the United States are not being fully developed and conserved; yet they are potentially the constructive and creative intelligence of our population.

We come next to those individuals at the lower end of the normal distribution of intelligence, the mentally subnormal and feebleminded. We shall confine ourselves to a discussion of the *moron* group, the highest of the feebleminded, since they come within the range of the public schools.

Individuals with low IQ's, whether 50, or even 80, constitute a serious educational prob-

lem in that they cannot be educated in the same way as the mass of pupils whom we designate as normal. In fact, whether these dullards and higher defectives are socially competent will depend to some extent on the educational treatment they receive, and on the emphasis which is given to the development of their nonintellectual traits, character and personality.

Ten fields of inquiry are employed in the study of individuals suspected of being mentally deficient; physical examination, family history, personal and developmental history, school progress, examination in school subjects, practical knowledge and general information, social history and reactions, economic efficiency, moral reactions, and the mental examination. The diagnosis of feeblemindedness is not a simple matter; it is rather a clinical problem in which the information of the ten fields is integrated. This information is also used to recommend how the individual is to be treated educationally and socially.

The intelligence tests combined with tests of school accomplishment—especially if some account is taken of practical knowledge and general information—evidently furnish the best means of defining the judgment of the school in assigning its pupils to regular or special classes.

Mental growth of the subnormal is slower than that of normal individuals. Growth ceases earlier, and mental decline begins earlier. Physically, as a group, they are somewhat below normal in height, weight, and physiological functions, although in these respects they are not as greatly retarded as they are in mental development. It is, therefore, not correct to say that their mental development is merely the consequence of physical retardation. Further, it is found that physical stigmata or anomalies (of the cranium, palate, teeth, ears, eyes, nose, lips, and tongue) occur with greater frequency among the feebleminded than among the normal.

It has often been urged that money spent on the education of inferior individuals is wasted. Their education is expensive, but authoritative opinion holds that these mentally retarded children may become social assets if given the proper kind of training. Such training in the end is considerably cheaper and humanly more desirable than negligence, which often produces social liabilities.

There are other kinds of exceptional children who, in the aggregate, constitute a large group, although each group in itself may be relatively small. The *psychoneurotic* child is one who is suffering from a morbid process. He is commonly designated as nervous, peculiar, queer, erratic, emotion-

ally unstable, odd, etc. He does not get along in groups of children of his own intellectual development; he is more or less out of step in his class, or in trouble with his playmates or teacher. The child may be physically and intellectually sound, but emotionally disturbed. It has been estimated that as many as 5 percent of the school population might be in some degree neurotic.

Psychoneurotics may be overalert, hypersensitive, and unduly stimulated by their environment, or they may manifest the very antitheses of these traits: namely, apathy, lack of sensitivity, and indifference to their environment. They may fluctuate between extreme pleasure and grief; they may be overenergetic or underenergetic; extremely tense or extremely lassitudinous. And, not infrequently, they may alternate rapidly between opposite extremes of emotional states.

The fact is that a neurotic disposition is not something which merely unfolds as a manifestation of "nature" acting perversely; it is a consequence of the interaction of the individual's constitution and the pressure of his environment. Under more favorable conditions many of the children who have been and are neurotic would never have been so.

The *psychopathic* are distinguished from the neurotic in that they present a more severe condition; one which is part of the individual's make-up. Psychopathic children may present any one of the following: "inadequate" personality, characterized by shiftlessness and lack of perseverance; paranoid personality, characterized by a tendency toward fixed ideas, persecutory trends, or fanaticism of various sorts; emotional instability, characterized by alternating marked dejection and joy; criminalism; sexual psychopathy; nomadism; pathological lying, characterized by extensive, complicated fabrications. These categories do not explain the origins nor suggest the treatments.

The teacher and parent are not expected to be psychiatrists, but they should be aware of the nature and causes of abnormal behavior; they should not attribute them merely to a wilful maliciousness, nor to stupidity, stubbornness, or indolence.

Another group includes children with major speech defects. Stuttering and lisping, under certain conditions, may lead to an exaggerated self-consciousness and to keen mortification.

Left-handedness is potentially a source of difficulty if it is unwisely dealt with from the beginning. The best clinics advocate the use of the hand that seems to be naturally more efficient and preferable.

A small group of children are "word-blind," unable to learn to read, or they learn but very slowly, although they are of normal intelligence. Failure to diagnose "word-blindness" may lead to an erroneous judgment of the child's intellect, even to dubbing him subnormal. This is a problem not yet adequately understood.

Children with special abilities present an educational problem in that only a negligible percentage of our schools make provision to conserve and develop these talents.

It is estimated that in the United States there are 3,000,000 children with hearing impaired in various degrees, but in 1930 only 18,200 deaf children were enrolled in schools and classes for the deaf. The large number of children with seriously impaired hearing cannot compete on a par with children whose hearing is normal, nor are the usual methods of academic instruction well suited to their needs.

In 1927, only 6,000 of the 14,500 blind children under 20 were being educated in state, private, or public day schools and classes. Further, there are 50,000 children whose vision is partially impaired and who should be in sight-saving classes. Of these, however, less than 5,000 were enrolled in such classes.

Only 11,500 of the 100,000 crippled children were being provided the special education they need.

Children with physical handicaps, especially those suffering from tuberculosis, heart disease, and malnutrition (6,000,000 of the latter), are serious medical problems. But some of them are also educational problems since, regardless of their mental caliber, they are not suited to instruction in a class of normally healthy and vigorous children.

There should be no question regarding the responsibility of public education toward the handicapped; for the United States is properly committed to a policy of *universal* public education. Even from a selfish attitude, failure to provide for exceptional individuals contributes, on the one hand, to an increase in the socially and economically incompetent, while, on the other hand, individuals of superior capacities fail to make the contributions of which they are capable.

[*Frank S. Freeman is Assistant Professor of Education in Cornell University. Reported from* Educational Administration and Supervision, *XXI (December, 1935), 672–85.*]

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

J. W. STUDEBAKER

NO one reason explains why people in the modern world in a period of crisis tend to discard the rights of democracy for the authority of dictatorship. Propaganda, cleverly manipulated, appeals to mass emotions, the technique of conspiracy learned during the World War, and the war psychology which made masses of people dependent on orders are factors. Also, the educational base for democratic action in certain countries was exceedingly inadequate.

Where democracy is most virile, and the possibility of success for dictatorship is most remote, as in Sweden and Denmark, educational programs are founded on the proposition that democratic action must come from mass understanding of social problems.

In some of the countries which have moved from democracy into dictatorship, the democratic leaders permitted the old system of education devised under monarchical régimes to continue without substantial change. But the dictators who followed saw clearly the relation of education to social organization. They used the educational system to indoctrinate youth with their ideas and to train up faithful followers.

While planned and persistent indoctrination is good for the social organization of dictatorship, its widespread use is fatal to democracy. For when it is applied in a democracy, it has no legitimate point of reference as it has in the dictatorship. Democracy is based on two important principles: that the majority shall determine the policy with respect to any given issue at any given time; and that the right of the minority to attempt to become the majority through the use of free speech, free press, and free assemblage shall be assured. Our educational point of reference is democratic self-government.

I am not suggesting that we indoctrinate for democracy. To interfere with the right of learners to study and understand types of social organization contrary to democracy, in the hope that ignorance will prevent them from deserting democracy, is inconsistent with the very essence of the democratic concept.

We maintain democracy only by majority consent. And we maintain the right of minorities even when they advocate an opposition to the very democracy which gives them the right of free speech and assembly. Either we have democracy by majority consent and with minority protection or we have something that is not democracy.

Majorities do not consciously choose to abandon majority rule.

Democracy is not seriously affected by the verbal attacks of minorities. What happens is that majorities fail to solve major crises in the social situation through representative government, thus giving real basis in fact to the attacks of minorities intent upon establishing a factional control.

I am contending for a technique which starts in the kindergarten and is applied in *all* learning process through middle life. This technique, or "good teaching," is described partly by the terms "scientific approach" and "discussion method." It induces critical inquiry and the habit of validating conclusions. Its purpose is to respect and nurture personality rather than to consume it, to liberate it step by step, to let personality operate at peak capacity in the social situation rather than to regiment it to respond automatically to given signals.

We must ask ourselves, Is the educational system, which we attempt to guide, building citizens for democracy?

May I suggest a few weaknesses in present-day education which need our particular attention.

1. There is still too much authoritarianism in the classroom with teachers playing the rôle of the drill-master. They probably think they are teaching history or mathematics, but of much more importance and danger is that they are training human beings to goose-step, and failing to help them to grow up into independent, self-respecting, self-disciplined citizens. The place to stop the growth of attitudes which prepare people for satisfactory cogs in the machine of dictatorship is in the classroom.

2. We have yet to clarify the meaning of the word *teach* when it is applied to the debatable, to the controversial, to social philosophy. This confusion is a definite weakness in our educational structure which has been seized upon by the propagandists and may be taken advantage of by a whole faction eager to control or prejudice the thinking of the oncoming generation. If we honestly believe in bringing youth to intellectual maturity instead of standardizing people by a process of indoctrination, we will give special attention to clarifying our position on this point and devote real energy in the defense of *teaching* as a process which impartially guides and encourages freedom of inquiry and self-validation of conclusions. We will resist every attempt to use the teaching profession as the carriers of propaganda for any faction, vested interest, political party, or pressure group.

3. A third danger is the tendency to avoid relating teaching to the present-day world and its problems. If there is one thing which democratic education should foster and develop, it is the ability of the learners to cope with the *real* issues

concerning the social situation. No matter how well we prepare people in the skill of figuring sums, writing essays, typing, and bookkeeping, we fail in a very large measure in our essential responsibility to democracy if young people leave our secondary schools without well-developed habits in the study and discussion of controversial issues.

4. A fourth weakness is our failure to plan the educative process for civic education for the vast majority of adults. Nothing, in my opinion, can contribute more to the improvement of elementary and secondary education than the direct participation of adults in a learning process managed by the same agency which is educating children. If we can be sure that a large proportion of high school graduates will continue the learning process in some organized way in later life, we shall not feel so obligated to force subject material into the few years of high school experience.

The adult public forum project which the Office of Education is sponsoring in ten communities in different states this year is a small beginning in the direction of a comprehensive program of adult civic education. Is it too much to hope that within a decade we may have 10,000 professional leaders of public discussion, leading at least 50,000 neighborhood groups per week in a critical, many-sided consideration of public affairs? Would approximately $60,000,000 a year be an extravagant expenditure for a great democracy to make on an educational process for genuine civic enlightenment to tens of millions of adults?

Those who know the tricks of publicity and the art of mass organization can wield an influence far greater than their understanding of the problems they presume to answer. The masses of people need organized help in facing the new barrage of factional appeals, in comparing propagandas, in analyzing proposals, in getting at the facts and understanding the important alternatives of social action. The test of democracy in America will be found in the extent to which the educational technique can frustrate the appeals to prejudice, fear, and crowd emotions.

J. W. Studebaker is United States Commissioner of Education. Reported from an address before the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association, St. Louis, Missouri, February 24, 1936.

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A NEW NATIONAL EDUCATION COMMISSION

An Editorial *

LAST December a new advisory body of nationwide significance was created by the National Education Association and its Department of Superintendence. This body, entitled the Educational Policies Commission, has 20 members including some of the leading officials of the National Education Association, the federal Office of Education, and the American Council on Education, as well as representatives from every large field of education. The Commission has elected as its chairman Dr. A. J. Stoddard, Superintendent of Schools, Providence, Rhode Island, and has selected as its secretary, Dr. William G. Carr, Director of the Research Division of the National Education Association. The financial support of the Commission has been guaranteed through a generous grant from the General Education Board.

The Commission has been created for a five-year period and is expected to make authoritative recommendations on various major aspects of education. In order to stimulate interest in present problems the Commission is now preparing a statement of significant educational issues. It is expected that this list will be useful to those who are responsible for discussion groups, and that it will be helpful to the Commission in securing the opinions of educators and laymen as to the relative importance of problems. The Commission will also concern itself with the coordination of the undertakings of state and national deliberative committees that are concerned with the problems of public education. Another immediate aim is the development of cooperative relationships with state planning boards and with the National Resources Board in order to coordinate educational planning with that in other fields.

The Commission is not an agency for research or standardization. It will, however, seek through cooperative means to develop long-term policies for American education. The Commission has already recognized the fact that it must gain the support of the masses of teachers and has therefore taken steps to create a very large body of consultants who will be expected to reflect the wishes and opinions of teachers. These consultants will also aid in disseminating the findings and recommendations of the Commission. It may be seen from this account that the Commission has embarked on a very ambitious program and differs from other educational commissions by its emphasis on the implementation of change in the programs and policies of the schools. Time will tell whether the Commission is equal to the responsibilities of such a tremendous task.—*By J. B. Edmonson, Dean, School of Education, University of Michigan, and member of the Educational Policies Commission.*

* This is the first in a series of editorials by members of the Editorial Advisory Board of the EDUCATION DIGEST.